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The Gods Rich in Praise

Early Greek and Mesopotamian Religious Poetry

Christopher Metcalf



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The Gods Rich in Praise

*Early Greek and Mesopotamian
Religious Poetry*

CHRISTOPHER METCALF

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

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First Edition published in 2015

Impression: 1

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014947489

ISBN 978-0-19-872336-3

Printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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Acknowledgements

The D.Phil. thesis on which the present study is based was written with the support of a Joint Classics Faculty and J. F. Costopoulos Scholarship, held at Balliol College in 2009–12. I am grateful to the Faculty and College for that award and for an additional grant that funded my studies of Hittite at SOAS, University of London. I would like to thank Daniel Schwemer and Mark Weeden of SOAS for allowing me to attend their lectures. The Classical Association awarded me a bursary to spend two weeks at the Fondation Hardt, Vandœuvres, Switzerland, in August 2011. Most of the work for the thesis and its revised version was done in the Sackler Library, Oxford, and I would like to express my gratitude to the institution and its librarians for providing such excellent resources for research. Final additions and corrections to the manuscript were made in March 2014.

I hope that the friends and colleagues who have helped with the thesis will accept these collective thanks. In preparing the manuscript for publication I have been grateful to receive further comments from my examiners Chris Pelling and Mark Weeden, my readers Johannes Haubold and Robert Parker, and Pascal Attinger and Martin West. I am entirely responsible for all aspects of the work, including the mistakes that it no doubt contains.

My final words of thanks are to my parents and my brother, for their support in every way.

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Abbreviations

ABoT	K. Balkan (1948). <i>Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri. Boğazköy-Tafeln im Archäologischen Museum zu Ankara.</i> Istanbul
ABRT	J. A. Craig (1895–7). <i>Assyrian and Babylonian Religious Texts.</i> Leipzig
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens.</i> London
aBZL	C. Mittermayer (2006). <i>Altbabylonische Zeichenliste der sumerisch-literarischen Texte. Unter Mitarbeit von Pascal Attinger.</i> Fribourg and Göttingen
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung.</i> Vienna
AHS	T. W. Allen, W. R. Halliday, and E. E. Sikes (1936). <i>The Homeric Hymns.</i> 2nd edn. Oxford
AHw	<i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch.</i> Wiesbaden
AOAT	<i>Alter Orient und Altes Testament.</i> Münster
ASJ	<i>Acta Sumerologica.</i> Hiroshima
AUWE	<i>Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka. Endberichte.</i> Mainz
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique.</i> Paris
BE	<i>The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania.</i> Philadelphia
BL	S. Langdon (1913). <i>Babylonian Liturgies.</i> Oxford
BLT	A. R. George (2009). <i>Babylonian Literary Texts in the Schøyen Collection.</i> Bethesda, MD
BPOA	<i>Biblioteca del próximo oriente antiguo.</i> Madrid
BWL	W. G. Lambert (1996). <i>Babylonian Wisdom Literature.</i> Winona Lake, IN
CAD	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.</i> Chicago
CDLI	<i>Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative</i> [website], < http://www.cdli.ucla.edu >
CHD	<i>The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.</i> Chicago
CLL	H. C. Melchert (1993). <i>Cuneiform Luvian Lexicon.</i> Chapel Hill, NC
CMaWR	T. Abusch and D. Schwemer (2011). <i>Corpus of Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Rituals.</i> Leiden
Coll. de Clerq	M. de Clerq and M. J. Menant (1888). <i>Collection de Clercq. Catalogue méthodique et raisonné.</i> Paris

CT	<i>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets, &c., in the British Museum.</i> London
CTH	E. Laroche (1971). <i>Catalogue des textes hittites</i> . Paris. S. Kořak and G. G. W. Müller <hethiter.net/>Catalog (2012-08-08) [website], < http://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/CTH >
DGS	A. H. Jagersma (2010). 'A Descriptive Grammar of Sumerian', Ph.D thesis, Leiden University
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz (1989). <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> . Zurich
EDG	R. Beekes (2010). <i>Etymological Dictionary of Greek</i> . Leiden
ELS	P. Attinger (1993). <i>Éléments de linguistique sumérienne. La construction de du₁₁/e/di 'dire'</i> . Freiburg and Göttingen
ETCSL	<i>The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature</i> [website], < http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk >
FAOS	<i>Freiburger Altorientalische Studien</i> . Wiesbaden
F-B	W. D. Furley and J. M. Bremer (2001). <i>Greek Hymns: Selected Cult Songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period</i> . Tübingen
FGrHist	F. Jacoby (1954–8). <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Leiden
FM	<i>Florilegium marianum</i> . Paris
Fouilles de Delphes	<i>École française d'Athènes. Fouilles de Delphes</i> . Paris
Frisk	H. Frisk (1960–70). <i>Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> . Heidelberg
GAG	W. von Soden (1995). <i>Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik</i> . 3., ergänzte Auflage. Rome
Gazetteer	A. R. George (1993). <i>House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia</i> . Winona Lake, IN, 63–161.
GIBM	<i>Collection of Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum</i> . Oxford
HAV	<i>Hilprecht Anniversary Volume. Studies in Assyriology and Archaeology dedicated to Hermann V. Hilprecht . . . by his Colleagues, Friends and Admirers</i> . Leipzig
HEG	<i>Hethitisches etymologisches Glossar</i> . Innsbruck
HFAC	G. Beckman and H. A. Hoffner, Jr (1985). 'Hittite Fragments in American Collections', <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> , 37: 1–60
HG	H. A. Hoffner, Jr and H. C. Melchert (2008). <i>A Grammar of the Hittite Language</i> . Winona Lake, IN
HGL	<i>Handbuch der griechischen Literatur der Antike</i> . Munich

HHw	<i>Hethitisches Handwörterbuch. Mit dem Wortschatz der Nachbarsprachen.</i> Innsbruck
HW	<i>Kurzgefaßtes hethitisches Wörterbuch. Kurzgefaßte kritische Sammlung der Deutungen hethitischer Wörter.</i> Heidelberg
HW ²	<i>Hethitisches Wörterbuch. Zweite, völlig neubearbeitete Auflage auf der Grundlage der edierten hethitischen Texte.</i> Heidelberg
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae.</i> Berlin
<i>Inscriptions de Delphes</i>	<i>École française d'Athènes. Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes.</i> Paris
<i>Iraq</i>	<i>Iraq.</i> London
ISET	M. Çiğ, H. Kızılyay, and S. N. Kramer (1969–76). <i>Sumer Edebi Tablet ve Parçaları.</i> Ankara
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies.</i> Cambridge
KAL	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts.</i> Wiesbaden
KAR	E. Ebeling (1915–20). <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts.</i> Leipzig
KBo	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi.</i> Leipzig and Berlin
KUB	<i>Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi.</i> Berlin
Kühner-Gerth	R. Kühner and B. Gerth (1890–1904). <i>Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache.</i> Hannover and Leipzig
<i>LfgrE</i>	<i>Lexikon des frühen griechischen Epos.</i> Göttingen
LHK	H. A. Hoffner, Jr (2009). <i>Letters from the Hittite Kingdom.</i> Atlanta, GA
Livingstone	A. Livingstone (1989). <i>State Archives of Assyria. Volume III: Court Poetry and Literary Miscellanea.</i> Helsinki
LKA	E. Ebeling (1953). <i>Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur.</i> Berlin
LSAM	F. Sokolowski (1955). <i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie mineure.</i> Paris
MAD	<i>Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary.</i> Chicago
MDP	<i>Mémoires de la mission archéologique de Perse.</i> Paris
MGG ²	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik begründet von Friedrich Blume. Zweite, neubearbeitete Auflage.</i> Kassel and Stuttgart
MSL	<i>Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon.</i> Rome
NABU	<i>Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires.</i> Paris
NFT	G. Cros (1910). <i>Nouvelles fouilles de Tello.</i> Paris
Nordionische Steine	U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1909). <i>Nordionische Steine.</i> Berlin
OECT	<i>Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts.</i> Oxford
OIP	<i>The University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications.</i> Chicago

Or NS	<i>Orientalia. Nova Series.</i> Rome
Oshima	T. Oshima (2011). <i>Babylonian Prayers to Marduk.</i> Tübingen
PAPS	<i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society.</i> Philadelphia
PBS	<i>University of Pennsylvania Museum. Publications of the Babylonian Section.</i> Philadelphia
Perachora	H. Payne and T. J. Dunbabin (1940–62). <i>Perachora: The Sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia.</i> Oxford
PMG	D. L. Page (1962). <i>Poetae Melici Graeci.</i> Oxford
PSD	<i>The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.</i> Pennsylvania
R	<i>The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia.</i> London
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale.</i> Paris
RAC	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum.</i> Stuttgart
RE	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.</i> Stuttgart
RIM	<i>The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia.</i> Toronto
Risch	E. Risch (1974). <i>Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache.</i> Berlin
RIA	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie.</i> Berlin and New York
Roscher	<i>Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie.</i> Herausgegeben von W. H. Roscher. Leipzig
RTC	F. Thureau-Dangin (1903). <i>Recueil de tablettes chaldéennes.</i> Paris
Ruijgh	C. J. Ruijgh (1967). <i>Études sur la grammaire et le vocabulaire du grec mycénien.</i> Amsterdam
SBH	G. Reisner (1896). <i>Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen nach Thontafeln griechischer Zeit.</i> Berlin
Schwyzler	E. Schwyzler (1950–3). <i>Griechische Grammatik. Vervollständigt und herausgegeben von Albert Debrunner.</i> Munich
SEAL	<i>Sources of Early Akkadian Literature</i> [website], < http://www.seal.uni-leipzig.de >
SG	D. O. Edzard (2003). <i>Sumerian Grammar.</i> Leiden
SLTN	S. N. Kramer (1944). <i>Sumerian Literary Texts from Nippur in the Museum of the Ancient Orient, Istanbul.</i> New Haven
SRT	E. Chiera (1924). <i>Sumerian Religious Texts.</i> Upland
STC	L. W. King (1902). <i>The Seven Tablets of Creation.</i> London
Stengel	P. Stengel (1920). <i>Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer. Dritte, zum großen Teil neubearbeitete Auflage.</i> Munich

STT	O. R. Gurney and J. J. Finkelstein (1957). <i>The Sultantepe Tablets I</i> . London. O. R. Gurney and P. Hulin (1964). <i>The Sultantepe Tablets II</i> . London
STVC	E. Chiera (1934). <i>Sumerian Texts of Varied Content</i> . Chicago
TCL	<i>Textes cunéiformes du Louvre</i> . Paris
ThesCRA	<i>Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum</i> . Los Angeles
TIM	<i>Texts in the Iraq Museum</i> . Baghdad
TMH NF	<i>Texte und Materialien der Frau Professor Hilprecht-Sammlung Vorderasiatischer Altertümer im Eigentum der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Neue Folge</i> . Berlin
TrGF	<i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> . Göttingen
UET	<i>Ur Excavations: Texts</i> . London
VAB	<i>Vorderasiatische Bibliothek</i> . Leipzig
VS	<i>Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der staatlichen Museen zu Berlin</i> . Leipzig and Berlin
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i> . Berlin and New York

Conventions

For Greek authors, the abbreviations used in the present work are the same as (or fuller than) those given in the *Greek-English Lexicon* of Liddell and Scott (ninth edition, with a revised supplement, Oxford 1996). Please see Catalogue D for references to the editions of the main Greek sources. The text of Homer generally follows the most recent Teubner editions.

The various sub-disciplines within cuneiform studies do not always follow the same conventions in every respect. The main harmonization that has been imposed in the following pages is the consistent use of index-numbers, which is now the standard in Sumerology but not yet elsewhere, in the transliteration of cuneiform signs: hence always be_2 and u_3 (never $bé$ or $ù$). Otherwise the transliterations of Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite texts seek to follow the current conventions in the respective fields.

For Sumerian, the readings of Old Babylonian signs generally follow the *aBZL* of Mittermayer-Attinger. Older readings have occasionally been retained in forms that are more likely to be familiar to non-specialists, especially in the case of divine names such as ‘Inana’ (rather than ‘Innana’, see P. Attinger in *NABU* 2007/37). In the absence of adequate dictionaries, I have made grateful use of informal *Zettelkästen* (Leipzig-Munich and Tübingen) and M. Civil’s online *Sumerian Syllabary* <<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/PSD/html/uniss/UI/oindex.html>>. In compiling the list of texts in Catalogue A, I have consulted the catalogue of Sumerian literature presented by Cunningham (2007) on the basis of a catalogue by Civil, which I have supplemented with my own records and the online *ETCSL* corpus. Please note that the line-numbering of some texts quoted here may differ slightly from the numbering in the *ETCSL*. The transliterations of Sumerian texts are my own, based on the published sources, and are not necessarily identical to those of the *ETCSL*. I have tried to make as much use as possible of the online images of Old Babylonian Sumerian literary tablets that are increasingly becoming available thanks to the *CDLI*; please see the comments in Catalogue A.

My presentation of the Old Babylonian Akkadian material has been helped by the online *SEAL* corpus, where transliterations and

translations of many of the texts listed in Catalogue B can now be found.

In preparing the Hittite sources (Catalogue C), I have been grateful to use the online version of the *CTH*, which also provides access to images of many tablets, and the detailed bibliographical notes of D. Groddek on the Boğazköy texts, <<http://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/grodlist>>.

All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

An attempt has been made to harmonize the use of brackets in quotations of ancient sources. Please note the following:

- [] a restoration of text that has been lost to damage,
- [()] a restoration on the basis of parallel versions of the passage in other texts,
- () a restoration of text deliberately omitted by the ancient scribe (e.g. in repeating identical parts of verses),
- < > a restoration of text mistakenly omitted by the ancient scribe,
- << >> deletion of text mistakenly written by the ancient scribe,
- { } (in certain classical sources) a passage of text that is considered spurious.

Where such editorial interventions seriously affect the whole interpretation of a passage in the context of the broader argument, brackets have been included in the English translation.

Introduction

This study seeks to contribute to the current academic debate on the relation between early Greek poetry and the ancient Near East, especially Mesopotamia. Given the state of scholarship today, it seemed best to select a particular corpus of texts for detailed analysis and comparison. The aim of the following pages is to introduce the primary sources on which this study is based: songs in praise of gods. Religious poetry of this type, which can also be called hymnic poetry, presents an attractive subject for several reasons.

Songs in praise of gods form an important and well-attested element of the extant early Greek and Mesopotamian literary sources. The main periods and cultures on which the present study draws are: Old Babylonian (OB) Sumerian and Akkadian (early centuries of the 2nd millennium BC), Hittite (mid- to late 2nd millennium BC), and early Greek (c.8th–early 5th centuries BC). The literatures of these periods provide ample primary material, which is set out in Chapters 1–4, for a comparative study of hymnic poetry in particular. Second, both classical and ancient Near Eastern scholars have noted that songs of this sort were usually composed according to certain formal conventions that can be analysed and described. In ancient Greece as in Mesopotamia, it was considered important to praise the gods in the correct way, which in practice seems to have meant: the established way. The conservative character of hymnic poetry makes it possible to discern certain general characteristics, especially regarding form (but also content), which in turn facilitate comparison between the different corpora under study. The third reason for the selection of this particular subject is that, at least within the ancient Near East, hymnic poetry can be seen as a paradigm for the translation and adaptation of literature across languages and cultures. To put it briefly, the abundant documentation provided by the cuneiform sources allows

us to reconstruct how Akkadian hymns began to emerge in the Old Babylonian period in clear imitation of older Sumerian models, and—more importantly—how Sumerian and Akkadian compositions were subsequently translated and adapted among the Hittites. It can be shown, therefore, that the texts on which this study is based were not necessarily confined to the cultures in which they had been composed. A Sumerian hymn from southern Mesopotamia could radiate as far away as central Anatolia in a Hittite adaptation. Such processes of transmission, which will be a major focus of my analysis, may hold certain broader lessons for the study of early Greek poetry in the light of Near Eastern sources.

Despite these advantages, early Greek and Mesopotamian hymns have never been, to my knowledge, the subject of a detailed, dedicated comparison. Some starting-points in past scholarship do exist and are discussed later in this Introduction ('Past and Future Perspectives'), but before entering into detail, it will be useful to reflect on the general aims of this study.

West (1997) is without doubt the most influential recent monograph on Near Eastern elements in Greek literature. Drawing especially on Sumerian, Akkadian, Ugaritic, Hittite, and Hebrew sources, West collected a broad range of Greek parallels, mainly in early hexameter verse, the lyric poets, and Aeschylus. The quantity and variety of the parallels, which extended to 'mythical and literary motifs, cosmological and theological conceptions, formal procedures, technical devices, figures of speech, even phraseology and idioms', led West to conclude that 'the Greek poets of the Archaic age were profoundly indebted to western Asia at many levels' (West 1997: 586). Building on the work of generations of earlier scholarship, this study considerably sharpened the focus of the debate and is now seen as the standard work in the area. One recent measure of its status can be taken in a new commentary on *Iliad* 22, whose author frequently points out signs of 'Near Eastern (oriental) influence' in the text of Homer, almost always with reference to West (1997).¹

The present study likewise takes this work as its point of reference. Whereas West's approach was wide-ranging, encompassing the entirety of extant early Greek poetry, the scope of the present study is more narrow but also, it is hoped, more precise. West (1997: 585)

¹ de Jong (2012). See esp. on 91–137, 156, 166–87, 182, 208–13, 263, 277.

argued that even if not each individual parallel that he had adduced proved to be convincing, the great volume of evidence would nevertheless amount to a cumulatively persuasive argument. Yet a detailed comparison of points that were raised briefly by West suggests that superficial similarities can be misleading: see Chapter 5 on hymnic openings and Chapter 6 on negative predications. These chapters are designed as test cases of what might be called the argument by accumulation, as attempted by West and others.² Chapter 7 on Hesiod, *Theogony* 195–206, and Chapter 8 on *Iliad* 1.62–4, on the other hand, seek to present new comparative material on passages that have already attracted the attention of past scholarship. Again I have tried to enter into greater detail than previous treatments, especially with respect to the Near Eastern sources, thereby aiming to achieve greater precision in my conclusions. Hence the present work can be read as a case-study of West's general argument that 'the Greek poets of the Archaic age were profoundly indebted to western Asia at many levels'. My conclusion will be that, in the case of hymns, Near Eastern influence on early Greek poetry was punctual (i.e. restricted to particular points) at the most, but certainly not pervasive.

AIMS AND LIMITATIONS

Chapter 1 presents the available Sumerian material from the Old Babylonian period. Based on a collection of about 120 compositions, the aim of the chapter is to describe and analyse the most salient features of form and content of Sumerian hymnic poetry. This represents the first attempt at such a synthesis, although my treatment, which is generally conservative and does not strive for novelty, of course builds on the work of others, especially J. van Dijk, A. Falkenstein, M.-C. Ludwig, W. Römer, Å. Sjöberg, and C. Wilcke.

² A further instance can now be seen in a comparative study of Homer's *Odyssey* by Loudon (2011: 320–1), who states that the supposed parallels, especially in the Book of Genesis, are 'too numerous to be explained by mere generic resemblance' and must therefore indicate some form of borrowing. This approach was already criticized in the reviews of West (1997) by Dowden (2001), who called for a more discriminating method, and Wasserman (2001). See also the remarks of Kelly (2008: esp. 292–302) and Hurst (2012).

The Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns are the fount of all the other Near Eastern sources: this represents the first accessible stage of Mesopotamian religious poetry. It must be mentioned that there exist even older literary texts from the mid-3rd millennium BC (the Fāra-period) in Sumerian and what may be an early form of Akkadian, a few of which seem to be of hymnic character. But since the interpretation of these sources remains extremely difficult, they have been adduced as evidence only in particular places where it seemed reasonably safe to do so.³

The composition of new Sumerian literature began to decline towards the end of the Old Babylonian period. In its later stages, Akkadian poems, including songs in praise of gods, emerge in the written record. These will be the subject of Chapter 2. While similar in form and content to older Sumerian compositions, the Akkadian hymns of the Old Babylonian period also present what seem to be new developments of conventional topoi. Following the lead of current scholarship on the literature of the Old Babylonian period, Chapter 2 presents the evidence for continuity and novelty in the hymnic material. Again, no such analysis of the material has been attempted so far. Many Akkadian hymns were also composed in the 1st millennium BC, but these texts rarely offer any new insights when compared to Old Babylonian sources and will therefore be quoted only selectively.⁴ This may seem like a surprising decision, given that an Akkadian hymn of the early 1st millennium BC is much closer in time to the Greek comparanda than an Old Babylonian source. But the comparison that will be attempted in this study is based in the first instance on formal features, which, due to the generally conservative nature of religious poetry, tended to remain in place after the Old Babylonian period. This is true of both of the formal features that will be discussed and compared in detail in Chapters 5 (hymnic openings) and 6 (negative predication). I therefore find it legitimate to concentrate on the earliest and fullest available sources in describing the conventions of Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic poetry for the purpose of comparison, and to adduce post-Old Babylonian material as supplementary evidence where it is relevant.

³ See e.g. Chs. 6 and 7. See Krebern timer (1998: 317–25) on the literary sources of this period.

⁴ The post-OB material has been collected by Groneberg (1987), see also e.g. the works of Seux (1976) and Oshima (2011).

To turn to the time that immediately followed the Old Babylonian period, little literary material is currently available from Mesopotamia itself in the second half of the 2nd millennium BC. But the case of the Hittite civilization of ancient Anatolia presents a perhaps unique opportunity to examine the translation and adaption of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns beyond Mesopotamia itself. Chapter 3, which takes its cue from an earlier study by G. Wilhelm, analyses the relevant Hittite sources (17th/16th–early 12th centuries BC) in the light of the Old Babylonian texts presented in Chapters 1 and 2. This discussion aims to shed light on the sometimes surprising transformations undergone by Sumerian and Akkadian religious poetry in the hands of the Hittites.⁵

The primary purpose of Chapters 1–3 is to present the sources from the ancient Near East that will form the basis of subsequent comparisons with early Greek texts in the second half of the study. My analysis will particularly emphasize the continuity of form and content in hymnic poetry between Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite. This continuity can help to overcome one possible objection to the comparative analysis that will be attempted in Chapters 4–8. For while it is often convenient to speak of the ancient ‘Near East’ or ‘Orient’, and hence to generalize about ‘Near Eastern’ or ‘Oriental’ as opposed to Greek practices, this implies a unified view of the region that may not always do justice to the diversity of its cultures.⁶ However objectionable such generalizations may be in principle, the present study hopes to illustrate that it is possible to speak of Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite hymns of the 2nd millennium BC as a coherent group.

This conclusion may seem paradoxical at first. One might not expect a song in praise of a god to lend itself easily to translation and adaptation across different cultures. After all, a song of this kind is not just a work of literature but also an expression of certain religious views that are rooted in the culture of origin. Why would anyone composing a hymn and prayer on behalf of the Hittite king in Anatolia be interested in what an older Sumerian or Akkadian text had to say about the Mesopotamian Sun-god? Context must, of

⁵ The most important new finding has been published separately in Metcalf (2011).

⁶ As Purcell (2006: 25) has remarked, ‘[One problem] with “Orientalizing” is simply that it presupposes an Orient.’ See already the comments of West (1997: viii–ix), and more recently Rollinger (2011b: 215–17).

course, be taken into account as much as possible. Were the texts in question ‘literary’ in the sense that they were known only to a few experts? To what extent was borrowed material actually used in practical religion?

Despite the many obstacles that will become obvious in Chapters 1–3, some remarks on the general questions raised by the Near Eastern material may be made here. The sources suggest that translation and adaptation of religious poetry could take place particularly where a basis for comparison already existed. It appears that the Hittites took a special interest in Sumerian and Akkadian compositions about the Storm-god Iškur/Adad and the Sun-god Utu/Šamaš. Similar deities figured prominently in the Hittite pantheon. In one subsequent Hittite adaptation of a relevant text (originally a hymn to Utu), verses that all too clearly betrayed their Mesopotamian origin were simply omitted, while predications that were of a sufficiently general nature were retained.⁷

Certain analogies may be perceived within classical antiquity. Different inscribed versions of a popular Greek paean to Apollo and Asclepius, perhaps of the 5th century BC, display variations in the text that have been thought to reflect particular local interests.⁸ E. Norden’s classic discussion of the style of Greek hymnic poetry (Norden 1913: 143–63) begins with an analysis of an ode of Horace (3.21) that plays with the established conventions.⁹ So could one argue, in the context of the current ‘Orientalizing’ debate, that early Greek hymns were yet another element (with local variations) within the Near Eastern continuum? The available evidence suggests that this was not the case.

Chapter 4 introduces the Greek sources, concentrating on the early period until the early 5th century BC. With some modifications, my analysis follows the pioneering work of E. Norden, K. Keyßner, and

⁷ The fact that hymns usually praise the gods for their timeless qualities and universal importance may also have contributed to the broader appeal of the texts themselves. This would agree with the recent observations of Sallaberger (2010: 309–10) on Mesopotamian wisdom literature (texts that reflect on the human condition): the enduring popularity of such texts, even beyond Mesopotamia itself, may be due in part to the timeless quality of their content.

⁸ The oldest version is thought to be F–B 6.1.1, from Erythrae opposite Chios in Ionia; the others come from Ptolemais in Egypt, Athens, and Dion in Macedonia. The fundamental study is Bülow (1929); see most recently Faraone (2011: esp. 210–11).

⁹ See more recently Stenuit (2009).

H. Meyer. This chapter, which also contains some preliminary comparative observations, is designed to introduce the second part of the study. On the basis of the material presented in Chapters 1–4, Chapters 5–8 analyse in detail selected points of comparison. The first two discussions are devoted to formal aspects: the openings of hymns (Chapter 5) and negative predication (Chapter 6). On the basis of certain similarities in these areas, some scholars have argued in favour of Greek borrowings from Near Eastern (ultimately Sumerian) models. But a detailed comparison, which also takes into account non-Greek and non-Near Eastern parallels, does not support that view.¹⁰ In sum, Chapters 4–6 argue that there is no good reason to believe that the form of early Greek hymnic poetry was in any way indebted to Mesopotamian models.

Moving away from a purely formal analysis, Chapters 7–8 consider two passages of Hesiod and Homer. The former, on the birth-episode of Aphrodite in the *Theogony*, tries to exploit the wealth of Mesopotamian and Anatolian religious poetry, especially hymns, about the celestial goddess Inana/Ištar. In the light of well-known Hurro-Hittite parallels to the Myth of Succession, historical information on the cults of Aphrodite *Oὐρανία*, the formulaic system of early Greek hexameter poetry, and Hesiod's taste for etymological speculation, my analysis aims to show how foreign and Greek elements came to be intertwined in this episode. The depiction of Aphrodite represents, according to the interpretation proposed here, a case of punctual influence, which was probably caused by the notoriety of celestial Inana/Ištar and similar deities across the ancient Near East.

Chapter 8, finally, discusses a short passage at the opening of the *Iliad* that has long been compared to a particular turn of phrase in a corpus of Hittite prayers. Recent research has shown that the phrase in question is in fact of Mesopotamian origin, as it first occurs in a Sumerian hymn to the Sun-god. This presents an opportunity to study in detail a process of translation and adaptation that, it is argued, possibly extended to the scene in the *Iliad*. The case is of particular interest because the available literary sources can be combined with a corpus of Hittite ritual texts that has only recently

¹⁰ For this purpose I have drawn on the well-known ethnological study by Emerson (1909) on the unwritten literature of Hawaii, including testimonies of religious poetry in use since remote Polynesian antiquity. My general guide to this literature has been O'Reilly and Poirier (1955).

become accessible. I argue that this particular Near Eastern element in the Greek text might be explained by the background of the poem in central western Asia Minor. While the passage in question has remained a riddle both to ancient and to modern scholarship on Homer, it can be illuminated with the help of Near Eastern religious poetry and, again, independent historical information allows us to understand how this particular case of influence could be explained. If accepted, the passage in question may provide the best-documented example of an ultimately Mesopotamian element in the text of Homer.

The necessity to select a core corpus of primary sources imposes an important limitation on the present work. As has been explained above, the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite chapters concentrate on the 2nd millennium BC, which offers the richest material by far. Earlier and later Sumerian and Akkadian texts have been mentioned where relevant but do not form part of the core corpus. The same is true of the modest Middle Babylonian Sumero-Akkadian literature from Syria¹¹ and of Ugaritic poetry.¹² Both have generally been left aside for the benefit of the much more important Hittite sources. Like West (1997: vii), I have found few starting-points for comparison in Egyptian literature.¹³ The religious poetry of the Old Testament, which is so different in nature both from early Greek and from 2nd-millennium Sumero-Akkadian hymns, also falls outside the scope of the present study. While I hope that I have not overlooked any crucial evidence in concentrating on what are currently the earliest accessible and most important sources for hymnic poetry within the ancient Near East, namely Old Babylonian Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite, it should be kept in mind that the present study encompasses only a selection of possible aspects of comparison (see also the Conclusion).

The following chapters aim to contribute to the current debate on the ancient Near East and Greek poetry of the early period, which sets a natural limit to the corpus of Greek sources. Although widely accepted, such chronological distinctions are not always easy to draw in practice.¹⁴ The fundamental works of E. Norden and

¹¹ See Kämmerer (1998) and Arnaud (2007).

¹² See Dietrich and Loretz (1991), West (1997: 90).

¹³ Most Egyptian hymns are devoted to the Sun, whose course they praise in various forms. See Assmann (1999), Knigge Salis and Luiselli (2013).

¹⁴ On the inevitably difficult periodization of ancient Greek literature, see now the remarks of B. Zimmermann in *HGL* 1 (2011), vi–vii.

K. Keyßner have revealed the generally conservative form of Greek hymnic poetry throughout antiquity, as will be seen in Chapter 4. It must also be acknowledged that it is often very difficult to date an individual hymn with any accuracy. Hence the lower temporal boundary of the Greek corpus is treated pragmatically here. A strictly observed limit in the early 5th century BC would have excluded too much important material from consideration. The evidence from inscriptions, though not widely cited by modern scholarship, is particularly helpful in illustrating the survival of the conventional *topoi* of hymnic poetry from the earliest sources onwards.

A second limit is imposed by questions of modern definitions. Although the term ‘hymn’ is widely used both by classical and by ancient Near Eastern scholarship, it is also generally admitted that this type of poetry is not always easily defined. Chapters 1–4 will explain what exactly the label denotes in each individual corpus. The overall definition is pragmatic: in short, a hymn is a song in praise of a god. Three formal components can be said to be typical of its structure: the opening section (*invocatio*) introduces the name of the deity accompanied by a series of epithets and, sometimes, an announcement on the part of the singer. The central section (*laudes*) amplifies the praises of the deity, usually in conventional ways that will be described in Chapters 1–4. Hymns generally end on a short prayer (for health, a long life, material happiness) or a brief salutation, or both (*preces*). While songs of this type form the core corpus of my study, related material must also be considered. On the Near Eastern side these additional sources include prayers, incantations, and votive inscriptions, which often provide valuable supplementary evidence of particular epithets or turns of phrase. I use the term ‘religious poetry’ to refer to this broader corpus of sources, of which hymns form a major part. Hymnic openings to epic poetry have also been taken into account. As Chapters 7 and 8 will further attempt to show, it is possible that concepts and phrases drawn ultimately from Sumero-Akkadian hymnic poetry, as described in Chapters 1–3, were in some instances adapted by early Greek poets in epic passages that are neither hymns nor prayers (the birth-episode of Aphrodite in the *Theogony*; the proposal to consult experts on the cause of Apollo’s wrath in the *Iliad*). While hymnic poetry forms the primary corpus of the present study, I have tried to avoid the narrow perspective that can result from such limitation.

PAST AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Among the small number of previous attempts to compare early Greek hymnic poetry and similar compositions from the ancient Near East, Norden (1913) remains the most important and stimulating from the point of view of the present study.¹⁵ Norden's aim was to chronicle the history of the 'major clash between the Orient and Hellas, whose superficial reconciliation in Christianity forms the premise of our basically contradictory culture'.¹⁶ The foundations of this conclusion were laid in the dialectically arranged central sections (pp. 143–308) that discussed the salient stylistic features of the relevant corpora of religious literature: Hellenica (thesis), Judaica (anti-thesis), and Christiana (synthesis). In the context of the present study, it is important to realize that Norden needed to distinguish the early Greek hymnic style, which he described as 'originally' or 'purely' Hellenic ('ur-', 'rein hellenisch'), as sharply as possible from the Near Eastern comparanda in order to prepare the ground for the final synthesis.

Norden's conclusions will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. In brief, Norden argued that the early Greek poets praised the gods only for what they did ('dynamische Prädikationsart'), while Near Eastern hymns mostly praised the gods for what they were ('essentielle Prädikationsart'). It must be remembered that, at the time of his writing, only a limited amount of Near Eastern literature apart from the Old Testament was available. While Norden did refer to Sumerian and Akkadian (and Egyptian) sources in his characterization of the 'Oriental' style, the earlier phases of Mesopotamian literature, in particular the Old Babylonian texts, were hardly known. In those texts, Norden would have found better evidence of the eagerness for action ('Tatenfreude') that he was so keen to ascribe to Greek deities and to deny to their Near Eastern counterparts.

Current scholarship on the relation between early Greek and ancient Near Eastern literature seems to have ignored Norden's seminal work. His book is often cited but, perhaps, rarely read.

¹⁵ Reprinted many times, most recently in 1996. There exists an Italian translation by C. O. Tommasi Moreschini (Norden 2002), with an informative introduction to the context and reception of the work.

¹⁶ '[Die Geschichte] des zwischen Orient und Hellas ausgefochtenen Riesenkampfes, dessen im Christentum äußerlich vollzogener Ausgleich die Voraussetzung unserer im Grunde zwiespältigen Kultur ist' (Norden 1913: 279).

While outdated (and never revised), it presents a useful starting-point.¹⁷ His antithesis between early Greek and Near Eastern hymns, which was intended as a subsidiary part of a larger dialectical argument and was therefore necessarily polarizing, is too simple. But the axiom from which Norden proceeded is not, I believe, necessarily discredited by his questionable results: 'in antiquity, style was a highly important feature [of religious poetry], which, if properly examined, will be helpful in answering questions of interpretation and illuminating historical connections.'¹⁸

Hymns and prayers have only a minor supporting role in the study of West (1997), whose aims and methods have already been summarized above. In a brief discussion that draws mainly on Sumerian and Akkadian as well as Hittite and Hebrew sources, West identifies a common idiom consisting of a number of conventional elements (West 1997: 264–75). For instance, the god may be said to have power in heaven and on earth; he may be said to have been raised to power by the highest of the gods; it may be claimed that the well-being of humanity depends on the mere will of the god and that certain things could not happen without his approval. West is concerned not so much with explaining the background of particular texts as with establishing common forms of expression in hymns of different cultures. West also argues that Greek hymnic openings of the 'Let me sing'-type can be derived directly from Near Eastern models (West 1997: 170–3), a position that will be revisited in Chapter 5.

The difficulty of drawing such direct lines has been pointed out, briefly, in a conference volume (Cassio and Cerri 1991) that reviewed the hymnic poetry of a range of ancient cultures, including Greece and Mesopotamia. In the concluding remarks (Cassio and Cerri 1991: 307–10), Cassio criticized the practice of isolating certain stylistic features in a particular region and treating examples of the same feature in other regions as imports. For the evidence can be complex: some formal elements that are thought to be characteristic of Sumerian-Akkadian hymns turn out to be paralleled in sources in remote

¹⁷ Norden (1913: 279) himself emphasized the provisional nature of his conclusions.

¹⁸ '[D]er Stil war im Altertum eine Großmacht, und richtig verhört, wird er auch Interpretationsfragen beantworten und religionsgeschichtliche Zusammenhänge beleuchten helfen' (Norden 1913: 143). For more recent reflections on the method of comparing religious poetry, see Stolz (1994).

Indo-European languages.¹⁹ One way to explain coincidences between distant peoples, according to West (2007: 22–3), is to postulate the existence of middlemen; another is to assume that the element in question may have travelled far from one very ancient source. But, according to Cassio, it is difficult to attribute distinctive formal elements of hymns to particular cultures in the first place.

Similar uncertainty has been expressed in another conference volume, edited by W. Burkert and F. Stolz. In his contribution, Burkert (1994: 15–16) noted that it is a natural and widespread phenomenon to sing the praises of the gods. The question of influence remains open:

To what extent can diffusion from Sumerian and/or Indo-European be discerned in the cultures presented here [i.e. Sumerian and Akkadian, Egyptian, Hittite, Greek, Indo-Iranian, and Hebrew]? That is a different question. In any case the Greek hymns are probably distinguished by their particularly consistent literary form of composition and their fully poetic nature, although they do remain within the common framework.²⁰

It is remarkable that two of the most notable scholars in the study of Near Eastern elements in Greek culture, namely W. Burkert and M. L. West, have paid rather little attention to the particular case of hymnic poetry, despite its attractions that have been described above. This may be due to the relative inaccessibility of much of the primary material on the Near Eastern side, syntheses of which are presented here for the first time (see especially Chapters 1 and 2).²¹ The Old Babylonian Sumerian sources in particular, which are of cardinal importance, have only been made available by recent scholarship, and it is probably fair to say that they have not yet been fully exploited even by specialists within the study of the ancient Near East.

The present book therefore aims to reconsider the early Greek material examined by Norden on the basis of an up-to-date (but

¹⁹ An important issue that will be raised in Chs. 4–6 and reviewed more fully in the Conclusion.

²⁰ 'Inwieweit sich in den hier vorgestellten Kulturen doch letztlich eine vom Sumerischen und/oder Indogermanischen ausgehende Diffusion feststellen läßt, ist eine andere Frage. Die griechischen Hymnen jedenfalls dürften in erster Linie durch die besonders konsequente literarische Formung, die Integration in Poesie überhaupt abgehoben sein, ohne doch aus dem gemeinsamen Rahmen zu fallen.'

²¹ The work of Latke (1991) is an uncritical collection of sources that is of limited use for the purpose of comparisons.

selective) treatment of the ancient Near Eastern sources, and to apply the result to the current debate on the background of early Greek poetry in general. It will be seen that songs in praise of gods represent a well-attested and, as the Mesopotamian evidence shows, very ancient type of poetry. In certain cases it can be proved that such songs were translated and adapted across cultures. But despite some general similarities, especially in structure, there is no evidence to suggest that the composition of early Greek hymnic poetry was in any way indebted to Near Eastern models. Punctual influence is visible in certain, historically explainable cases. If these conclusions are correct, they form a corrective to the currently prevailing view that the influence of Near Eastern models pervaded early Greek poetry.

But there are also positive conclusions to draw. Faced with the difficulty of identifying precise lines of transmission to the Greek poets, some recent scholarship has begun to retreat to higher levels of abstraction and now prefers to speak more broadly of, for instance, an 'eastern Mediterranean epic tradition'²² in which Homer worked, or a common 'long cosmogonic tradition in the eastern Mediterranean'²³ that included the *Theogony*. The result of such a broader approach, with its consequent lack of detail, is a loss of focus on the exegesis of the Greek sources, and hence it will not be followed in the present study. The Near Eastern material being far from exhausted, there is still scope for detailed comparative investigations that help to formulate practical explanations of particular Greek passages. As Chapters 7 and 8 illustrate, this focused approach also allows us to understand how the material in question was interpreted and adapted in each individual culture.²⁴

²² The title of Bachvarova (2005); see also Bachvarova (2010) on 'eastern Mediterranean didactic epic'.

²³ López-Ruiz (2012: 43).

²⁴ Responding to a demand advanced by Haubold (2002). More recently, Haubold (2013) has proposed a broader comparative approach that, in the case of the Homeric poems, transcends the search for parallels and instead explores the ways in which early Greek and Mesopotamian literary texts address certain fundamental questions, such as 'How did the world come into being? What is man's place in it?', without necessarily seeking to determine their historical relationship. Yet Haubold (2013: 71–3) also acknowledges that there remains scope for new and detailed work on the primary sources and the possible connections between them, which is the concern of the present study. The insights and problems that result from this more concentrated approach are in my view just as thought-provoking as the 'large questions' on which Haubold prefers to dwell.

Comparisons sometimes reveal what appear to be fundamental differences that have so far been insufficiently appreciated. Chapter 5 argues that the early Greek concept of poetry differed in an important respect from Mesopotamian culture. Sources from Homer to Pindar speak of a clear conceptual association between poetry and memorization that cannot be paralleled in the cuneiform world, where the idea of the written word was predominant. The association between poetry and memorization was embodied by the Muses, who remain a uniquely Greek phenomenon as the patrons of poets and daughters of Memory. Contrastive observations of this kind may point to a larger task for the future. Once a balanced and accurate understanding of the extent of Greek dependence on Near Eastern literature has been achieved, it may be possible to return to a question that has long been posed but not yet answered: what, in the light of the available evidence, was the distinctive contribution of the Greeks?

But even where details are successfully shown to have been imported from elsewhere, this really just marks the beginning of the task: to explain the new whole that has been created with their help (Diller 1962: 43).²⁵

²⁵ 'Aber auch wo der Nachweis der Übernahme von Einzelheiten geglückt ist, beginnt damit ja eigentlich erst die Aufgabe, das neue Ganze zu erklären, das mit ihrer Hilfe entstanden ist.' See also the remarks of Heubeck (1960: 185). Such calls have been reiterated after the appearance of West (1997): see the review by Halliwell (1998).

Sumerian Hymns of the Old Babylonian Period

In the entry devoted to Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns in the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, C. Wilcke has already presented a brief thematic survey ('Thematik der Götter-H(ymne)n', *RIA* s.v. Hymne A.§5.1). Wilcke shows that these songs tend to be composed according to certain established conventions that can be described and analysed. What follows is an attempt to expand Wilcke's brief treatment in the *Reallexikon*. But if 'Sumerian hymns' are to be the topic of the present chapter, it must first be asked what the terms 'Sumerian' and 'hymn' imply.

Not all gods to whom Sumerian hymns are addressed are of Sumerian origin. *Martu A*, for instance, is a hymn in praise of the god of the ill-defined, perhaps nomadic peoples known as the Amorites. Martu is thought to have entered the Mesopotamian pantheon in the 23rd century BC at the earliest,¹ and the point is that a hymn like *Martu A* was a means by which such a newcomer could be incorporated. The hymn achieves this by referring to Martu as the son of the chief god An and by relating at some length his elevation by the other gods. These are common topoi of Sumerian hymnic poetry, and a composition like *Martu A* shows that they can be used not only to praise well-known and ancient gods like Enlil or Inana but also to integrate a less-established figure into the pantheon. Therefore the term 'Sumerian hymn' should not be taken to imply that the deity concerned is a 'Sumerian' god in any exclusive sense, or that every

¹ See *RIA* s.v. Martu. A. §8. On the reading of the name see now Attinger (2011). The early history of the Amorites, including the nomadic question, has been reviewed by Michalowski (2011: 82–121).

concept or phrase contained in the hymn is ‘Sumerian’ in origin. The hymns were written in the Sumerian language but are expressions of Old Babylonian Mesopotamian religion, in which Sumerian conventions remained highly influential.² Hymns are a prime subject for the study of religious syncretism, but the present chapter will make no attempt to undo the efforts of the ancients by distinguishing between ‘genuine Sumerian’ and ‘non-Sumerian’ elements.³

The term ‘hymn’ also requires clarification. I am concerned here only with songs in praise of gods, not of kings, cities, temples, or cultic objects. While a large number of individual hymns to gods are preserved, current evidence might suggest that hymns in praise of kings were copied much more widely by the ancients.⁴ It is in fact a remarkable aspect of the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns in praise of gods (it is in this sense that I use the term ‘hymn’ from now on) that, according to the available sources, most survive only in a small number of manuscripts. Some have concluded that the extant texts were reference copies.⁵ But major exceptions to this general tendency would include *Enlil A* and *Nisaba A*. These two compositions were copied more widely because of their special relevance (in the case of *Enlil A*) to the glorification of the city of Nippur, where many of our Sumerian literary texts originate and where Enlil was thought to

² Compare the remarks of Krecher (1978: 103): ‘im Einzelfall werden wir bei den Texten der sumerischen Literatur oft nicht zwischen “echt Sumerischem”, “Nicht-Sumerischem” und “Nach-Sumerischem” unterscheiden können. Wer ganz sicher gehen will, mag also den Ausdruck “sumerische Literatur” im Sinne der vorsichtigeren Formulierung “babylonische Literatur in sumerischer Sprache” verstehen.’

³ That approach used to be particularly popular in studies of the goddess Inana/Ištar. In his edition of the hymn *Inana F*, Römer (1969: 112–13) (and again Römer 2001: 149–50) has tried to distinguish between features that are originally ‘Sumerian’ (Inana as deity of the sky and of vegetation) and originally ‘Akkadian’ (her warlike aspects). Recent scholarship is reluctant to draw such distinctions, which find little support in the ancient sources: see Zgoll (1997: 161–2), Edzard (2004: 580–2), *RIA* s.v. Pantheon A.I §10.

⁴ Songs in praise of kings were an important part of what is referred to as the OB school curriculum, on which see now Tinney (2011) and *RIA* s.v. Schule §11.2.2. Volk (2011: 270) has recently criticized the designation of songs in praise of kings as ‘hymns’, a term that he would reserve (as the present study does) to songs in praise of gods. ‘Hymns’ praising kings in some respects imitated hymns to gods, but that is not the subject of the present chapter: see most recently Suter (2010: 348).

⁵ Thus Shehata (2009: 361). See also Tinney (2011: 581–6) and Delnero (2010: 42–3) on compositions from the ‘scribal curriculum’ versus ‘liturgical’ compositions (but note that ‘adab’- and ‘tigi’-hymns—while ‘liturgical’ in the broadest sense—can hardly be classed as being ‘typically written in the Emesal dialect of Sumerian’, as Delnero implies).

reside, and (in the case of *Nisaba A*) to the practice of writing itself, *Nisaba* being the patron of scribal art.

In terms of native Sumerian terminology, a large proportion of the hymns available today are designated by subscripts as 'adab'- or 'tigi'-songs, or can be understood as such where the subscript is not preserved or was not written down.⁶ The 'adab', which is the better attested of the two, has a more sophisticated formal structure than the simpler 'tigi', but these two types cannot be distinguished by content. Both are sung in praise of deities and often contain a prayer for a king. Many other songs that we today refer to as hymns had no subscript such as 'adab' or 'tigi', but ended on a prayer or on what is known as a doxology: 'Praise (za_3-mi_2) be to (the deity)' or 'Your (the deity's) praise is sweet/great!'⁷ Wilcke (1975: 261) has distributed the extant Sumerian subscripts into the categories ('Haltungen') 'lyric' and 'epic' (as well as 'border-line cases'), and while the 'adab' and the 'tigi' (which are 'lyric') are the main representatives of Old Babylonian Sumerian hymnic poetry, it is perhaps unsurprising that a few of the other subscripts of the 'lyric' class also sometimes designate hymnic compositions (i.e. simple songs of praise to a deity). These, in particular the 'balbale' ('dialogue-poem?') and the 'sergida' ('extended song'), are included in the present study, as are hymnic prologues to narrative poems and a few miscellaneous compositions that are at least partly of hymnic character. But the emphasis lies on 'adab'- and 'tigi'-songs.

⁶ Marked here as 'adab(?)' or 'tigi(?)'. 'adab' and 'tigi' are the names of the instruments that accompanied the song; despite some ancient contextual evidence, their precise nature is not known. See now Shehata (2009: 251–7) with older literature.

⁷ Some regard the ' za_3-mi_2 '-doxology as a label in its own right: e.g. Volk (1995: 39–40) considers the narrative composition *Inana and Šukaletuda* a 'mythologisches Epos' in modern terms and a 'Preislied auf Inanna' in ancient terms since it ends on the ' za_3-mi_2 '-doxology, 'praise be to Inana!' Yet it has been pointed out that the ' za_3-mi_2 '-doxology sometimes stands alongside an ancient subscript (e.g. *Ur-Ninurta B* ends on the doxology but is also referred to in the subscript as a 'tigi' to Enki). This suggests that the doxology has a more general sense (see Ludwig 1990: 33–4, Wilcke 1975: 258) that is not equivalent to the other subscripts. Black (1992: 75) interpreted it as an exclamation marking the end of a song. Wilcke (2006: 204) puts it thus: 'eine solche Doxologie [i.e. za_3-mi_2] weist das Werk zwar nicht notwendig als "Preislied" aus, ordnet es aber sehr wohl in den weiteren Kreis der dem Ruhm des Helden oder der Gottheit dienenden Poesie ein.' I employ the term hymn ('Preislied') in a narrower sense (mainly 'adab'- and 'tigi'-songs) and do not use the ' za_3-mi_2 '-doxology as a criterion for inclusion in my core corpus.

THE NATURE OF THE TEXTS

The kings who commissioned hymns ensured that these songs would not be forgotten, as is shown by a peculiar phrase in some of the hymns of king Išme-Dagan (1953–1935 BC), a ruler of the dynasty of Isin and prolific patron of hymns:

^diš-me-^dda-gan-me-en du-ri₂-še₃ ka-ka mu-ni-ġar

I am Išme-Dagan, I have laid (this song) into the mouth for ever.

(*Išme-Dagan K*, to Inana, 44, with coll. Kramer 1957: 87)⁸

Eventually the time will have come to fix these compositions in writing. Particularly close interaction between singers and scribes is suggested by certain hymns of King Šulgi of Ur.⁹

While the bulk of the hymns available to us were discovered in Nippur and Ur, a large number of texts are of unknown provenance.¹⁰ Many copies are written in the typical single-column tablet-format known as ‘imgida’,¹¹ but some are preserved on larger tablets on which several different compositions were inscribed (*Sammeltafel*). Such *Sammeltafel* clearly show that hymns composed under earlier kings were deliberately collected and organized.¹²

⁸ On hymns concluding on this phrase see now Zólyomi (2010: 420–8). The existence of a possible Akkadian version in the Middle Assyrian *Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta* (*ina pi-i uġ₃-meš lu-še-eš-[kin₂]*, col. VI B rev. 31’, of divine praise and music in fragmentary context, ed. Machinist 1978) seems to have been overlooked so far. Later still, a hymn of Assurbanipal concludes on a wish that the praises of Aššur ‘shall be laid into the mouth’ (*liš-ša₂-kin ina pi-i*) of future generations (ABRT 1.32 rev. 12’, ed. Livingstone 1989: 4–6).

⁹ See Alster (1992: 45–9) and my discussion in Ch. 5.

¹⁰ See Brisch (2007: 33–5) on the general problem of provenance relating to OB Sumerian literary texts.

¹¹ See now Ludwig (2009: 9–11).

¹² Thus the *Sammeltafel* STVC 65 (CBS 13381 = P268462) collects ‘adab’-songs to An composed on behalf of at least four different kings: *Ur-Ninurta E* (col. I), *Lipit-Eštar C* (col. II), *Šu-Suen E* (col. III 1’–IV 11’), *Šu-ilišu B* (col. IV 12’–V [28’]). Of the two remaining fragmentary compositions (col. V [29’]–VI 5’ and col. VI 6’–[x]), the former is certainly a hymn (perhaps ‘adab’, the designation is broken off) to An, while the nature of the latter is unclear. A similar *Sammeltafel* is CBS 11325+ (BPOA 9 pl. 60–1), which contains hymns to Ninurta on behalf of various kings: *Šu-Suen D* (tigi?, col. I–II 17), *Ninurta D* (tigi?, col. II 18–III 5’), *Šulgi T* (tigi?, col. III 6’–36’) and *Bur-Suen A* (adab, col. III 37’–IV). A different criterion for compilation—the commissioning king—was used in TCL 15.18, a *Sammeltafel* with three hymns of Išme-Dagan (see Ludwig 1990: 7–9): *Išme-Dagan F_A* (col. I–II 2’), *Išme-Dagan F_B* (col. II 3’–III 2’), both ‘adab’(?)—songs to Enlil; *Išme-Dagan G* (col. III 3–IV, adab(?) to Ninlil). Three songs about An and Inana (including two that are also present on STVC 65)

Since about half of the hymns that make up my corpus were composed on behalf of a king, a certain temporal framework can be established. The oldest datable hymn (that is extant) was recognized by Falkenstein (1953a: 21 and 366) to be *Gudea A* (tigi to Bau), which would place the original composition c.2100 BC.¹³ In the centuries that followed, the dynasties of Ur III and Isin-Larsa were highly productive in the beginning but soon decreasingly so. Finally, only very few Sumerian hymns were composed in the name of Hammurabi (1792–1750 BC) and of his successors on the throne of Babylon, by which time a corresponding Akkadian tradition had developed (see Chapter 2).

CONTEXT

There can hardly be any doubt that the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns were composed to be sung. The ‘adab’- and ‘tigi’-songs contain references (known as rubrics) to the appropriate manipulation of

and one on Nanše were collected on VS 10.199: *Lipit-Eštar C* (adab to An, col. I–II 8), *Ur-Ninurta E* (adab to An, col. II 9–III 7), *Inana F* (balbale?, col. III 8–41), *Nanše B* (balbale, col. III 42–IV).

¹³ With reference to hymns (to gods), Brisch (2010: 158) cautions that we cannot be sure that ‘the songs that were transmitted in the OB schools were actually the same that were sung in royal courts or temples’. But the term ‘school’ should not be used too loosely. As was mentioned in the introduction to the present chapter, most OB hymns (to gods) are extant only in a small number of copies and are therefore unlikely to have been part of any widespread curriculum. The question raised by Brisch can only be answered by detailed historical and linguistic studies of each individual composition. Note for now that *Gudea A* (tigi to Bau) shows no sign of the syncretism between Bau and Ninisina that later emerged in the Isin-dynasty: see the remarks of Richter (2004: 514–19) and Ceccarelli (2009) on *Išme-Dagan B* (adab to Bau). Hence in this case there is no reason to doubt the conventional view, as articulated again by Römer (2001: 3), that *Gudea A* is an OB copy of an older original. See also Klein (1990: 65–79) on the general question. One fragment (6N-T288) that has been attributed to *Ur-Namma B* (tigi to Enlil) is supposedly of Ur III date according to Civil (1985: 33–4). The existence of at least two unpublished Ur III hymns to Nisaba and Enenusi(?) that lack OB versions has been indicated by Rubio (2000: 203–4). *Luma A* (adab to Bau) has been said to have been composed on behalf of Eanatum of Lagaš, which would make the composition much older than *Gudea A* or *Ur-Namma B* (perhaps 25th century BC). For historical and linguistic grounds against the attribution see Ludwig (1990: 28 n. 9) now with Krispijn (2001: 252–3), and in general Römer (2001: 19–20) and Marchesi (2006: 119–20).

the string ('sa') in different sections of the composition ('sagida', 'sağara'), which suggest that the songs were accompanied on a string instrument. On the *Sammeltafel* CBS 11325+ (*BPOA* 9 pl. 60–1) col. III 5', the scribe has even added: šu-ta e-ne di-[dam(?)], '[to be(?)] played with the hand' (i.e. not with a plectrum?), to the 'sağara' rubric of *Ninurta D* (tigi?).¹⁴ Administrative records from Nippur in the reign of Rim-Sin of Larsa (1822–1763 BC) attest the participation of 'tigi'-singers in a festival of the city-god Ninurta.¹⁵ Indeed the common and most ancient Sumerian term for 'praise', 'za₃-mi₂', seems to be closely related to the word for 'lyre' (ĝes₃za₃-mi₂).¹⁶

Various self-referential elements are interspersed in the texts. Sometimes the singers allude to their own singing at the end of a hymn, as if promising to keep celebrating the god if he will hear them:

sipa^dri-im-^dsuen nam-en-bi an^den-lil₂-la₂ ki ħe₂-ağ₂-e-ne
lu₂ ser₃-ra-ke₄ za₃-mi₂-zu enim-bi-a mi-ni-ib-du₁₀-ge-ne

May An and Enlil cherish Rim-Sin the shepherd, and the priesthood!
The singers will sweeten your (Haia's) praise in their words.

(*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 53–4)

mi₂ zi du₁₁-ga diğir lu₂ ħur-sağ a-re-eš dib-ba-am₃
nar-re ser₃ ku₃-ga im-mi-in-du₁₁ mu-ni pa bi₂-in-e₃

The truly honoured one, the god, the man of the mountains surpassing
praise,

the singer sings of him in holy song and manifests his renown.

(*Martu A*, sergida, 56–7 with coll. Kramer 1957: 81)

'adab'- and 'tigi'-hymns that ask the god to favour a particular king will presumably have been commissioned by that king and perhaps sung in his presence.

¹⁴ As noted by Wilcke (1975: 260 with n. 88), see also Shehata (2009: 338–40). Brisch (2010: 157) questions Wilcke's interpretation without suggesting a more convincing alternative.

¹⁵ See Huber Vulliet (2010: 131–2) on Ni 2426 and Ni 2436, and further Shehata (2009: 40–4).

¹⁶ See *ELS* §939 and Michalowski (2010: 218–19). The entry on ĜIŠ-compounds in Diri III 52 (*MSL* 15 138), which Michalowski adduces, should be read: [za]-me-in = ĜIŠ.AR₂.RI = *sa-am-mu-u₂*. This is a case of creative lexicography based on the semantic similarity of 'ar₂' and 'za₃-mi₂' ('praise') as observed by Landsberger (1934: 155), who compared: ĝes₃za₃-mi₂-^dinana, ĝes₃ar₂-ri-[^dinana] at Hh VIIIB 82–3 (*MSL* 6 124). Note that there is now an OB attestation of the equation: za₃-mi₂ = *tanittum*, 'praise', in *BLT* 14 rev. 63.

A number of compositions combine hymnic praises of a deity with quite concrete descriptions of the circumstances in which the songs were performed. The most extensive is *Iddin-Dagan A*, ‘sernamur-saĝa’ of Ninsiana, where praises of Inana (the second stanza in particular is a typical hymn to Inana) alternate with descriptions of the new-year celebrations at the court of Isin. As Römer (1965: 144) observes, the song itself may have been put on at the end of the celebrations to accompany the great banquet in the palace (*Iddin-Dagan A*, 204–10). Rather more indirect contextual information is provided by compositions like *Ninurta B*, a song that combines the praises of Ninurta with his trip to Eridu to secure fertility and that may have been performed upon his return to Nippur (Falkenstein 1959: 80), and *Nanna E*, which Charpin (1986: 373–9) has interpreted as a hymnic accompaniment to the anointing of the god’s statue after its ritual bath.

Despite such self-referential elements, Sumerian hymns tend not to associate themselves explicitly with particular historical events. *Iddin-Dagan A* could have been recited at any or even at each new-year festival at the court of Isin, but it does not tell us at which particular one. In other words, hymns are designed not to go out of date. This agrees with a suggestion of Hallo (2010: 24–5): whatever purpose the hymn had originally been composed for—in many cases, according to Hallo, the dedication of a statue—it will subsequently have lent itself to repeated performances.

It is therefore unsurprising that even when we are in a position to relate a given hymn to a particular event for historical reasons, the hymn itself will (at the most) only allude to the actual historical context.¹⁷ Thus in the case of *Sin-iqišam A*, a hymn to the minor god Numušda of the city of Kazallu, year names indicate that king Sin-iqišam of Larsa had cult statues of the god delivered to the city in the second year of his reign. It is natural to suppose that the hymn to Numušda was composed for that occasion,¹⁸ but the hymn alludes only vaguely to the actual historical circumstances of its composition. Sin-iqišam prays to Numušda to hand over the ‘disobedient lands’ to

¹⁷ While speculative in many places, the table of ‘Correlations Between Išme-Dagān’s Year Names, Royal Inscriptions and Hymns’ established by Frayne (1998) illustrates how few and vague such allusions are in the hymns to gods.

¹⁸ Thus Richter (2004: 445), Brisch (2007: 49–50), *RIA* s.v. Numušda §6. On the OB history of Kazallu see Charpin (2004: 87–8).

him (*Sin-iqišam A*, 26), which points to his intention to gain influence on the contested area of Kazallu. The hymn itself refers to Numušda as the son of Suen and relates his installation in Kazallu by Enlil: a transparent and possibly innovative attempt to integrate Numušda into the Babylonian pantheon.

STRUCTURE

One aspect of the conventional nature of Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns is their generally conservative structure. Before praising the god, the singer must first identify him (*invocatio*), usually by stringing together some of his names and epithets. Sometimes the singer also announces his intention to sing or praise the god as he begins his hymn. The opening is followed by the main body of the song in which the singer expands his praises of the deity (*laudes*). Many hymns also contain a prayer for well-being and prosperity or conclude on a brief salutation (*preces*). While these terms are modern, they sometimes correspond to the formal divisions imposed by ancient terminology. Thus in *Iddin-Dagan A*, the important composition on the new-year's festival at Isin, the first stanza ('kirugu') is clearly an invocation of the goddess (concluding with the phrase 'Let me put this in song for the lady!': see discussion in this section) that serves as a preface to the hymn as a whole. Prayers are regularly found in particular, designated parts of the hymn ('ĝešgiĝal', 'uru': see discussion in this section) and may therefore have been understood as a characteristic formal element by the ancients.¹⁹

There is no single way to begin a Sumerian hymn. Occasionally one finds the very elegant *a-a'* structure in which the singer repeats a set of identical verses and inserts the name of the deity the second time around:

nin-ĝu₁₀ sa₆-ga dumu an ku₃-ga
 ĥi-li du₈-du₈-a ki-aĝ₂ ^den-lil₂-la₂

¹⁹ Note in this context the entry in line 17 of a recently published syllabary MS 2845 (ed. Civil 2010: 24–5): a-ṽta¹-ab | KAṣṽŠU¹ | *ka-a-r[i-bu-um(?)]*, which may equate the designation 'adab' with the sign and Akkadian word for 'he who prays'—possibly reflecting the formal importance of the prayer-element in this type of hymn.

ni₂ gal gur₃-ru an-ša₃-ta e₃-a
 nin mi₂ du₁₁-ga diġir-re-e-ne
^dba-u₂ sa₆-ga (dumu an ku₃-ga)
 ħi-li du₈-du₈(-a ki-aġ₂ ^den-lil₂-la₂)
 ni₂ gal gur₃(-ru an-ša₃-ta e₃-a)
 nin mi₂ du₁₁-ga (diġir-re-e-ne)

My lady, benevolent one, child of holy An,
 endowed with charm, beloved of Enlil,
 who inspires great awe, who emerges from the sky,
 lady honoured by the gods,

Bau, benevolent one, child of holy An,
 endowed with charm, beloved of Enlil,
 who inspires great awe, who emerges from the sky,
 lady honoured by the gods.

(Gudea A, tigi to Bau, 1–8)

But such an elaborately crafted opening is hardly typical.²⁰ Instead, a number of more general topoi may be said to be typical of the opening *invocatio*. Thus the hymn often begins on the word ‘en’ or ‘nin’/‘in-nin’, ‘Lord’ or ‘Lady’, while the name of the god is held back by a verse (or more):

en me galam-ma²¹ umuš ki ġar-ra ša₃ su₃-ud niġ₂-nam zu
^den-ki ġeš-tu⁹ ġeštu daġal mas-su maḥ ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne

Lord of the skilful divine powers, who establishes counsel, of profound
 heart, omniscient,

Enki, of broad understanding, great expert of the Anuna.

(Ur-Ninurta B, tigi to Enki, 1–2)

en zi nam-tar-ra ^dnin-lil₂-le du₂-da
^dsuen dumu ki-aġ₂ ^dnin-lil₂-la₂

²⁰ Further examples of the *a-a*’ structure in the hymnic *invocatio*: *Inana D*, 1–2; *Inana E*, tigi, 1–4; *Luma A*, adab to Bau, 1–5; *Martu A*, sergida, 1–4; *Nergal C*, tigi, 1–10; *Ninazu A*, balbale, 1–2; *Ningišzida B*, 1–2; *Nuska B*, sergida, 1–2. See Wilcke (1975: 214) on this and other kinds of ornamental repetition in Sumerian poetic style.

²¹ One ms. reads: en igi galam (CT 36.31; kindly collated by J. Matuszak, July 2010), the other clearly has: en me galam (VS 10.145). Falkenstein (1950: 112) followed the former (‘Herr, hohen Sinns’), but since ‘igi galam’ is not attested elsewhere, the commonly attested ‘me galam’ (see Farber-Flügge 1973: 156) is preferable. Wilcke (1975: 290) notes the incipit: en me ṽgalamṽ-ma in the OB literary catalogue TMH NF 3.54 col. I 7 and the entry in the Middle Assyrian catalogue KAR 158 col. III 3: em me galam-ma, which may cite this hymn.

True lord who decides the fates, born of Ninlil,
Suen, beloved son of Ninlil.

(*Nanna H*, adab, A1–2)²²

As the examples already quoted show—and this is generally true—the *invocatio* is very rich in epithets. These, being a typical element of praise, define the particular characteristics of the deity. One such type of epithet well attested in the *invocatio* is the reference to the divine parents or spouse of the deity. The genealogical topos usually relates the individual deity to one of the great gods:

^den-ki en dumu-saĝ an ku₃-ga

Enki, lord, first-born son of holy An

(*Hymn to Enki*, 1),

ur-saĝ dumu nir-ĝal₂ ^den-lil₂-la₂

Hero, lordly son of Enlil.

(*Ninurta A*, sergida to Ninurta, 1)²³

A topos of particular interest for comparative reasons (Akkadian, Hittite, Greek: see Chapter 5) is what Wilcke (1977: 186) has referred to as the “‘Ich will preisen’-Formel”. Wilcke notes that this element of the *invocatio* is attested in Akkadian and other Semitic languages as well as in Greek and Latin, but claims to be unaware of Sumerian

²² Other examples: *Enki and the World Order* (hymnic prologue), 1; NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki, 1; *Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 1; *Lipit-Eštar H*, uadi to Inana, 1; *Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 1; *Inana B*, 1; *Inana C*, 1; *Inana E*, 1; *Inana and Ebih* (hymnic prologue), 1; *Inana and Šukaletuda* (hymnic prologue), 1; *Lulal A*, sergida, 1; *Išbi-Erra C*, tigi to Nanaja, 1; *Nanna G*, 1; *Nanna J*, 1; *Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 1; *Nergal C*, tigi, 1; *UET 6.189+585*, to Ningal, 1; *Ninĝišzida B*, 1; *Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 1; *Ninisina A*, 83 (incipit of the goddess’ self-praise); *Ninisina D*, 1; *Ninšubur A*, 1; *Šulgi T*, tigi(?) to Ninurta, 1; *Nisaba A*, 1; *Sin-iqušam A*, adab(?) to Numušda, 1; *Ibbi-Suen A*, tigi to Suen, 1; *Ibbi-Suen D*, ululumama to Suen, 1; *Išme-Dagan X*, to unnamed god, 1.

²³ Other examples where a genealogical reference occurs in the epithet-rich opening section: *Lipit-Eštar C*, adab to An, 2 (‘grandfather of the gods’); *Luma A*, adab to Bau, 1; *Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 1; *Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 5; *Enki and the World Order* (hymnic prologue), 2; *Išme-Dagan K*, to Inana, 1; *Inana C*, 2; *Hymn to Inimanizid*, 1–4; *Abi-Ešulū A*, to Marduk, 1; *Martu A*, sergida, 5; *Martu B*, 3–4; *Nanna G*, 1–4; *Nanna J*, ululumama, 5; *Nergal C*, tigi, 2; *Ninĝišzida A*, balbale, 4–6; *Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 1–2; *Ninisina A*, 83–4 (incipit of the goddess’ self-praise); *Išbi-Erra D*, to Ninisina, 6; *Bur-Suen A*, adab to Ninurta, 1; *Ninurta B*, 4; *Ninurta’s return to Nippur* (hymnic prologue), 1–4; *Nisaba A*, 2; *Nuska B*, sergida, 1–2; *Sadarnuna A*, 7; *Ibbi-Suen A*, tigi to Suen, 3; *Ibbi-Suen C*, adab to Suen, 3; *Ibbi-Suen D*, ululumama to Suen, 4; *Šulpa’e A*, 8; *Utu B*, 9.

examples. West (1997: 170) likewise gives the impression that this is a Semitic-Hittite-Greek topos.

Though not particularly common, there are in fact a few instances of ‘Ich will preisen’ (the ‘Let me sing’-phrase) in the Sumerian hymns.²⁴ The formula takes two common forms, the first being ‘me-teš₂ i-i’, which is conventionally translated as ‘to praise’ due to the equation with Akkadian *nâdum*, ‘to praise’, in the lexical lists and bilingual literature.²⁵ The second form is ‘ser₃ du₁₁/e’, literally ‘to say a song’ = ‘to sing’.²⁶ In both constructions the object of the verb is either the god himself (sukkal zi me-teš₂-e ga-i, ‘Let me praise the true vizier’) or an abstract attribute of the god formed with the ‘nam’-prefix: nam-maḥ-za ga-am₃-du₁₁, ‘Let me sing of your greatness’. The two constructions (‘me-teš₂ i-i’ and ‘ser₃ du₁₁/e’) can also be conflated: lugal-ḡu₁₀ nam-maḥ-zu ser₃-ra ga-am₃-i-i, ‘(Haia) my king, let me make your greatness emerge in song’. Examples from Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns include:

nin gal <a>-zu maḥ saḡ gegge-ga

ku₃ ^dnin-isin₂^{si}-na dumu an-na me-teš₂ ḥe₂-i-i

The great lady, great healer of the black-headed,
holy Ninisina, daughter of An, I shall praise.²⁷

(*Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 1–2)

[x] du₂-da-zu e₂-kur-ta ^den-lil₂-le b[i₂-in-du₁₁-ga]

[^d]nuska du₂-da-zu (e₂-kur-ta ^den-lil₂-le bi₂-in-du₁₁-ga)

[e]n ^dnu-dim₂-mud-e abzu-ta lugal nam-ḥe₂ mi₂ mu-ri₂-in-du₁₁

²⁴ As Streck (2002: 223) notes in passing: ‘Derartige Ankündigungen sind [...] aus der hymnischen Literatur bekannt’, citing *Iddin-Dagan A*, 16 (discussed below).

²⁵ Already OB: me-teš₂ ḥe₂-i-i-ne // li-iš-ta-ni-da (CT 21.41, col. II 14’ = Or NS 80, 324); me-teš₂ ḥa-ba-i-i // li-i-n[a-ad] (UET 1.146 col. V 9’ = Or NS 80, 313); [me-t]eš₂ im-i-i-ne^{tuš-ta-na-du-ni-in-ni} (TMH NF 4.89 4’ with Wilcke 1976: 85). There is a variant form: (name of god) me-teš₂-e ga-i, on which Attinger (1998: 184) remarks: ‘me-teš₂-e i-i doit être distingué de me-teš₂ i-i, mais la nuance de sens m’échappe.’ *Nanna G*, 1–4, seems to omit <me-teš₂> ga-an-i-i, but the main ms. is fragmentary.

²⁶ One also encounters ‘ser₃-ra/ser₃-re-eš du₁₁/e’, ‘to say in song/by singing’ (see ELS §791), and ‘ser₃’ can also be omitted or replaced by a similar term (e.g. ‘en₃-du’).

²⁷ The alternative is ‘may you indeed be praised’ (ETCSL). I prefer to translate ‘ḥe₂-i-i’ as 1st sg. because ‘ḥe₂-’ can alternate with ‘ga-’, which is certainly 1st sg., see ELS § 65. Both ‘ḥe₂-i-i’ and ‘ga-i-i’ occur in the ‘Let me sing’-phrase with no discernible difference in person (as the attestations given here show). Compare also the opening of the Middle Assyrian hymn to Ninisina, KAR 15: me-teš₂ ḥe₂-i-[i] // lu-ut-ta-[-i-id] (obv. 2–3). Streck (2002: 227), discussing the prologue of *Ninurta’s Return to Nippur* (see below), also translates ‘me-teš₂ ḥe₂-i-i’ as 1st sg., adducing similar arguments.

sugal₇ zi me-teš₂-e ga-i
^dnuska sugal₇ maḥ ^den-lil₂-la₂ za₃-mi₂-zu du₁₀-ga-am₃ ku₇-ku₇-da
 lugal-ġu₁₀ ser₃-re-eš₂ ga-am₃-du₁₁
 [] your birth was decreed from the Ekur by Enlil,
 Nuska, your birth was decreed from the Ekur by Enlil,
 from the Abzu, Lord Nudimmud has honoured you as(?) the king of
 prosperity,
 let me praise the true vizier!
 Nuska, great vizier of Enlil, your praise is sweet, most sweet.
 Let me sing of my king!

(*Nuska B*, sergida, 1–6)

in-nin egi₂ zi dumu-gi₇ e₂-maḥ-ḥa ḡešdan lugal-la
 nu-nus diġir nam-nin x DU an ki-e diri
 ar₂-^fa-ni⁷ ser₃-ra ga-mu-ni-ib-be₂ mi₂ zi-de₃-eš ga-am₃-du₁₁
 Lady, true ruler, noble child of the Emaḥ, spouse of the king,
 good woman, goddess, . . . (?) ladyship, surpassing heaven and earth,
 let me sing her praise in song, let me honour her!

(*Lipit-Eštar H*, uadi to Inana, 1–3),

munus zi ^dutu kalam-ma ^dlamma me-teš₂ ga-i-^fi⁷
 The true woman, Sun-god of the land, the protective goddess, let me
 praise.

(*Bau A*, B1)

^den-ki en du₁₁-ga zi-zi-da me-teš₂-e ga-a-i-i²⁸
 Enki, the lord of the true pronouncements, let me praise.
 (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 5)

In *Rim-Sin B*, a hymn to Haia, the ‘Let me sing’-phrase occurs not at the beginning but halfway (lines 29–30 out of 58), as if the singer were drawing a fresh breath for the second part:

lugal-ġu₁₀ nam-maḥ-zu ser₃-ra ga-am₃-i-i
^dha-ia₃ nam-gal-zu gi₁₆-sa-še₃ ga-am₃-pa₃-pa₃-de₃-en
 My king, let me make your greatness emerge in song,
 Haia, let me proclaim your greatness forever!²⁹

²⁸ Thus *CT* 36.31; the other ms. (*VS* 10.145) presents the variant: ^den-ki mi₂ du₁₁-ga zi-zi-da(?) me-teš₂-e ga-i-i.

²⁹ There are other instances where a ‘Let me sing’-phrase appears in the course of the song, just as if it were a spontaneous exclamation on the part of the singer: *Inana B*, 63, 65; *H* 180+, to Utu, 45¹.

One can add some attestations in hymnic prologues of Old Babylonian Sumerian narrative poems:

sul me₃-kam sul me₃-kam in-du-ni ga-an-du₁₁
 en ^dĜIS^{bil2-ga}-mes sul ^rme₃-kam in-du-ni ga-an-du₁₁⁷

The young man of battle, the young man of battle, let me sing his song,
 lord Gilgameš, the young man of battle, let me sing his song!³⁰

(*Gilgameš and the Bull of Heaven*, version from Meturan, 1–2)

an-gen₇ dim₂-ma dumu ^den-lil₂-la₂
^dninurta ^den-lil₂-gen₇ ^rdim₂⁷-ma ^dnin-tur₅-e du₂-da
 a₂-ġal₂ diġir ^da-nun-ke₄-ne ħur-saġ-ta e₃-a
 ni₂ ħuš ri-a dumu ^den-lil₂-la₂ ne₃-ni-ta nir-ġal₂
 lugal-ġu₁₀ ši-maĥ-e-en nam-maĥ-zu me-teš₂ ħe₂-i-i
^dninurta ši-maĥ-e-en nam-maĥ-zu me-teš₂ ^rħe⁷-i-i

Created like An, son of Enlil,
 Ninurta, created like Enlil, born of Nintu,
 mighty god of the Anuna, emerging from the mountain,
 filled with dreadful awe, son of Enlil, confident in his own strength,
 my king, you are indeed great, I shall praise your greatness,
 Ninurta, you are indeed great, I shall praise your greatness!

(*Ninurta's Return to Nippur*, 1–6)

(long hymnic prologue, verses 1–23, then last verse before the beginning of the narrative):

ki-sikil ^dinana me-teš₂-e ga-i-i

Let me praise the young woman Inana!

(*Inana and Ebiġ*, 23)

The origin of these ‘Let me sing’-phrases is perhaps to be sought in exclamations of singers at certain occasions. This at least seems to be the case in *Iddin-Dagan A*, the hymn on the new-year festivities in Isin. As the singers, musicians, and other participants parade before the goddess in the third and fifth ‘kirugu’ (a kind of stanza, ll. 35–43, 60–6, after *SRT* 1), they exclaim: ^dinana-ra silim-ma ga-na-ab-be₂-en, ‘Let us say hail to Inana!’³¹ But this refrain also occurs repeatedly in the *invocatio* of the hymn, culminating in a slightly varied form: nam-ġal-la-na / in-nin₉-ra ser₃-re-eš ga-na-ab-be₂-en, ‘Let us speak of her

³⁰ The phrase ‘let me sing his song’ is repeated for another four lines. See most recently George (2010) on the text of this poem.

³¹ On the plural form see now *DGS* §12.5.

greatness in song for the lady!’ (1–16, after SRT 1). The parallel structure ([name]-ra silim-ma ga-na-ab-be₂-en / [epithet]-ra ser₃-re-eš ga-na-ab-be₂-en) could suggest that in this instance, the ‘Let me sing’-phrase is related to or perhaps has its origins in the exclamations of singers (‘Let me say “hail!”’) during festivals. That could at any rate help to explain why ‘Let me sing’-phrases occur not just in the *invocatio* but sometimes also as a recurrent verse, a kind of refrain within a single hymn.³² For perhaps they were in origin genuine refrains, which some singers went on to adapt and place at the beginning of the hymn, producing what we now call a ‘Let me sing’-incipit.

Iddin-Dagan A also provides the only Old Babylonian Sumerian example known to me of the deity instructing the singer to sing her own hymn:

nin-ĝu₁₀ za₃-mi₂ an-ki-ke₄-ne za₃-mi₂ ma-ni-in-du₁₁
 nu-u₈-ge₁₇ an-ki-da du₂-da-me-en
 nu-u₈-ge₁₇-ge ki ku₃ ki sikil-la ser₃-ra mu-ni-in-ĝar³³

Praise to my lady (Inana)! She has made me recite the praises of those of
 heaven and earth:

‘Sacred one (= Inana)! You are born with heaven and earth!’

The Sacred one has put it in song at a holy and pure place.

(*Iddin-Dagan A*, 215–17)

In other words, Inana appears to have commissioned her own praises: presumably, the passage is to be understood as referring to the hymn itself, *Iddin-Dagan A*. This would be a worryingly isolated instance of such divine intervention in this period if it were not for comparable passages in the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns to Ištar and Nanaya.³⁴

³² Compare *Inana D*; *Ibbi-Suen B*, sernamgala to Meslamtaea and Lugalgirra; *Nanna C* (balbale); *Ninisina E* (adab); *Ninurta F* (balbale); *Utu A* (adab).

³³ Read with SRT 1 and UM 29-16-91+29-96-118, and following the new translation by Attinger (2010: 24). In line 215, Ni 9802+4363 and HAV 2 have an unclear ‘an-ki-še₃’; only the latter (photo available under CDLI-number P259248) has the dubious dative ‘-ra-’ infix in the verb printed by Römer (1965: 134). In line 217, Ni 9802+4363 (and HAV 2?) reads: mu-na-an-ĝal₂, ‘... it is (in song?) for her there.’

³⁴ See Ch. 2. One could also compare an obscure passage (*Šulgi E*, 20–2, similarly 243–4) where a king’s scholars (‘um-mi-a’) are said to have composed ‘adab’, ‘tigi’, and ‘malgatum’-hymns at the behest (‘enim-ta’) of the goddess Geštinana, who is sometimes referred to as a protective deity (‘lamma’) of songs or singers: see Ludwig (1990: 41–2), Goodnick Westenholz (2005: 362–3).

The conventional content of the praises contained in the main body of the hymn (*laudes*) will be discussed in the following section. As far as structure and style are concerned, there is little basis for formulating specific principles. The Sumerian hymns employ all kinds of constructions to describe the attributes and activities of the god: active and passive verbs in the perfective (*hamṭu*) and imperfective (*marû*) forms ('You do such-and-such'), participles ('Doing/being such-and-such'), and nominal clauses with enclitic copulae ('You are such-and-such', 'Such-and-such is yours').³⁵ Only a few hymns (not usually 'adab'- or 'tigi'-songs) restrict themselves to one particular form of predication.³⁶

Narrative elements are uncommon.³⁷ In *Ninisina A*, 105–9, the goddess herself tells in her self-praise how Enlil ordered her to destroy the enemy lands. The passage begins with a verb with the preformative 'u-', 'When' (^den-lil₂-le ša₃-ga-ni um-ma-an-ḥu-luḥ-ḥa-a-ta, 'Enlil, when his heart grew frightened...'), which can be attached only to perfective verbs and may introduce a sequence of events beginning in the past. Having cursed the enemy land, Ninisina says that Enlil sent her, the warrior, there (im-ma-ši-in-gi₄-gi₄). But this brief reference to an event in the past is clearly subordinated to the general descriptive praises of the goddess and her fearsome nature. The same is true of short episodes in which hymns relate that the deity they are praising was elevated to their position by one of the chief gods: such episodes will be discussed in the following section.

Finally, the *preces*. These are usually formulated as precative (^he₂-... , 'may...!') or as an imperative, and occur either at the end of the hymn (if the song is an 'adab', this final prayer is contained in a rubric known as the 'uru', as noted by Falkenstein

³⁵ Wilcke (1975: 235–9) has illustrated this variation in his stylistic analysis of *Nintur A*, a simple 'tigi'-hymn.

³⁶ Thus *Inana C* contains an extensive section (115–57) in which each verse ends on 'za-(a-)kam', '(Such-and-such) is yours'; all extant verses of *Ninimma A* end on '-men', 'You are (such-and-such)'; H 180+, to Utu, contains a long litany (15'–43') based on the phrase 'za-da nu-me-a', 'Without you (such-and-such would not exist)', on which see Ch. 6.

³⁷ 'Der Stil der [sumerischen Hymnen] ist meist beschreibend, eine inhaltlich mehr oder weniger verknüpfte Reihung von Einzelaussagen über ihren Gegenstand' (*RIA* s. v. Hymne. A. §3.1).

1950: 98), or about halfway through in a one-line antiphon known as the ‘ġešgiġal’.³⁸ Some illustrative examples:

‘uru’:

^di-din-^dda-gan-na ħulu-du-ni ^{ġeš}gaz-bi ħe₂-me-en

(Ningublaga,) may you be a lethal weapon against Iddin-Dagan’s enemies!

(*Iddin-Dagan C*, adab to Ningublaga, B30)

^diš-me-da-gan dumu ^de[n-lil₂-la₂]-ra nam-ti u₄ su₃-ra₂ saġ-e-[eš ri]g₇-a-ni-ib

(Bau,) bestow a long life on Išme-Dagan, the son of Enlil!

(*Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 64)

nun ^dri-im-^dsuen bala ħul₂-ħul₂ u₄ su₃-ud-da šu zi ġar-mu-na-ab

im nam-ti-la-ke₄ du-ri₂-še₃ nu-kur₂-ru mu-bi gub-ni

sipa ^dri-im-^dsuen nam-en-bi an ^den-lil₂-la₂ ki ħe₂-aġ₂-e-ne

Grant to prince Rim-Sin a happy and lasting rule,

inscribe its years on the tablet of life that is never altered!

May An and Enlil cherish Rim-Sin the shepherd, and the priesthood!

(*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 51–3)

‘ġešgiġal’:

[su]l-gi-re ti su₃-ud mu nam-[ħ]e₂ saġ-e-eš rig₇-g[a?]

(Ninurta,) bestow on Šulgi a long life (and) years of plenty!

(*Šulgi T*, tigi(?) to Ninurta, 29)

^dnergal nun ^dšu-i₃-li₂-šu ġešgem-ti-la-ni u₄ su₃-ra₂-še₃ ħe₂-me-en

Prince Nergal, may you be the trust of Šu-ilišu until distant days!

(*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 37, after CBS 14074+)

^den-lil₂ ^diš-me-^dda-gan dumu ki-aġ₂-za nam-lugal-la-a-na bala-bi ħa-ra-^rsu₃-ud¹

Enlil, may the reign of kingship of Išme-Dagan, your beloved son, be long for you!

(*Išme-Dagan H*, adab to Enlil, 20)

As usual, there is scope for variation. Instead of an actual prayer, the ‘uru’ may state that the king will keep praying to the god in the future

³⁸ See Römer (1965: 6) with attestations. On the term itself see most recently Mirelman and Sallaberger (2010: 189–91).

(as in *Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal), or it may assert that the deity has already bestowed the gift upon the king. In that case, the hymn can be understood as a song of thanks.³⁹ The prayer was almost always spoken on behalf of the king.⁴⁰ Hymns that were not explicitly commissioned on behalf of kings therefore do not usually contain a prayer. Instead they tend to end on the 'za₃-mi₂'-doxology ('[name of god] be praised', '[name of god] your praise is sweet/great'). Again these distinctions are not absolute. *Ur-Ninurta B*, a 'tigi' to Enki, contains both a prayer for the king and a 'za₃-mi₂'-doxology, and *Nisaba A* ends on a prayer of Enki to Nisaba, concluding on a doxology.

In sum, it is clear that if hymns mentioned the king, they often contained some element of prayer. Indeed the prayer is probably the most important element of the song from the perspective of the worshipper, and the fact that it tends to occur at particular moments, especially in the 'adab'-songs, suggests that the prayer may have been considered to be a characteristic formal element that complements the praises of the gods.

PRAISE

The conventional praises of the gods in Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns encompass two main subjects: the eminence of the deity among the other gods of the pantheon, and their importance to the well-being of mankind.

To begin with the relevance of individual gods to the collective pantheon (sometimes referred to as the Anuna-gods in this context), the chief gods are An and Enlil, who exert the function of king or shepherd of the gods:

an lugal diġir-re-e-ne, 'An, king of the gods' (*Lipit-Eštar C*, adab to An, 9); en diġir lugal ^den-lil₂-me-en, 'You are lord, god, king, Enlil' (*Enlil A*, 139, after KU 25); ^den-lil₂ en gal diġir-re-e-ne, 'Enlil, great lord of the

³⁹ As in *Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 38–40. See already Falkenstein (1950: 148–9).

⁴⁰ One exception is *Nergal C* (tigi), in which the prayer is spoken before the 'sagida' on behalf of the city, and before the 'saġara' probably on behalf of the god as if on behalf of a king.

gods' (*Išme-Dagan H*, adab to Enlil, 22); an ki-a dili-ni diġir-ra-am₃ dub-us₂-a-ni za-e-me-en, 'In heaven and earth (Enlil) alone is god, you (Enki) are second to him' (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 15).

Some gods are said to be guardians or leaders of the others; others are praised for their might, their sense of justice, or their intelligence:

^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne saġ-keše₂-bi na-nam, '(An) is indeed⁴¹ the guardian of the Anuna' (*Ur-Ninurta E*, adab to An, 6); ka-aš maḥ unken-na ša-mu-un-bar-re-en, 'You (Inana) indeed make the great decision in the assembly' (*Inana A*, balbale, 15, after SRT 9 with coll. Kramer 1957: 81); ^dutu maš₂-saġ ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne, 'Utu, the bellwether⁴² of the Anuna' (*Utu the hero*, 3).

^den-ki gaba-ġal₂ a-nun-ke₄-ne, 'Enki, strong one among the Anuna' (NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki, 29); diġir gal-gal-e-ne a₂-ġal₂-bi-im, '(Inana) is the mighty one among the great gods' (*Inana C*, 4, after CBS 13982); a₂-ġal₂ ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne diġir gal-gal-e-ne, '(Marduk,) powerful among the Anuna, the great gods' (*Abi-Ešul_h A*, to Marduk, 3); ur-saġ a₂-ġal₂ ^da-nun-ke₄-ne, 'Hero (Ninurta,) powerful among the Anuna' (*Lipit-Eštar D*, adab to Ninurta, 1); nin-ġu₁₀ a₂-nun-^Γġal₂ e₂^Γ-kur-^Γra^Γ, 'My lady (Nisaba,) mighty one of the Ekur' (*Nisaba A*, 6, after UET 6.583); ne₃ gal diġir gal-e-ne, '(Suen,) great force of the great gods' (*Šu-Suen F*, adab(?) to Suen, 14).

si-sa₂ diġir-re-ne-me-en, '(Bau,) you are righteous among the gods' (*Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 35); diġir si-sa₂ a-nun-ke₄-ne, '(Utu,) the righteous god of the Anuna' (*Šulgi Q*, adab to Utu, 9').

^den-ki ^{ġeš}-tu⁹ ^{ġeš}tu daġal mas-su maḥ ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne, 'Enki of broad understanding, the great expert of the Anuna' (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 2); lugal ka-lal₃ diġir-re-e-ne, '(Enki,) king honeymouth of the gods' (*Ninġišzida A*, balbale, 34); galam-ak-ak diġir gal-gal-e-ne, '(Haia,) crafty one among the great gods' (*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 20); gal¹-zu unken-na, '(Ninġišzida,) wise in the assembly' (*Ninġišzida A*, balbale, 27); gal-zu igi-ġal₂ diġir-re-e-ne, '(Nisaba,) wise and sage one among the gods' (*Nisaba A*, 13, after YBC 13523); igi-ġal₂ ^da-nun-ke₄-ne-me-en, 'You (Nuska) are the sage among the Anuna' (*Nuska B*, sergida, 15).

But the most important function in the pantheon is to assist one of the chief gods:

⁴¹ On 'na-nam' see now DGS §26.3.

⁴² 'maš₂-saġ', 'bellwether', is a metaphorical term derived from herding, see Snell (1986: 137).

ša₃-kuš₂ an ku₃-ga ad-gi₄-gi₄ kur g[al . . .], ‘(Enki,) counsellor of holy An, adviser of the Great Mountain (= Enlil)’ (*Išme-Dagan E*, balbale to Enki, A5); kišeb-ğal₂ aia ^den-lil₂-la₂, ‘(Haia,) keeper of the seals of father Enlil’ (*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 7); ^dinana e-ne-da nu-me-a an gal ka-aš nu-um-bar ^den-lil₂ nam nu-[. . . -tar], ‘Without Inana, great An takes no decision and Enlil [decides] no fate’ (*Inana C*, 14, after CBS 13982); an lugal-da za₃ mu-un-de₃-ša₄ nam mu-un-di-ni-ib-tar-re, ‘(Inana,) you equal king An and decide fates together with him’ (*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 10); a-ma-ru ^den-lil₂-la₂, ‘(Iškur,) flood of Enlil’ (*Iškur A*, adab, 3); en šu-ğar ^den-lil₂-la₂ mu-u₈-gi₄ ša₃ aia-na(var.: -zu) mu-un-se₂₉, ‘The lord (Nergal) avenges Enlil, he cools his father’s heart’⁴³ (*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 55); nam-tar-r[e] nam mu-un-di-ni-ib-tar-re, ‘As for determining fate, you (Nergal) determine it with (An)’⁴⁴ (*Nergal B*, 39); [d]ub-sar an-na-me-en, ‘(Ninimma,) you are the scribe of An’ (*Ninimma A*, A4); nin munus-sul a₂ maḥ ^den-lil₂-la₂-me-en, ‘I, (Ninisina,) lady, heroine, am the great force of Enlil’ (*Ninisina A*, sergida, 83); kur gal-da za₃-[ša₄] / [e]n ^dnu-nam-nir-da nam tar-ra, ‘(Ninlil,) equaling the Great Mountain (= Enlil), deciding the fates with lord Nunam-nir (= Enlil)’ (*Ninlil A*, adab, 1–2); ^dnin-urta a₂ zi-da kur gal-la(-)aš(-) ša-mu-un-ti-la-ni-me-en / eš-bar du₁₁-ga-ni ki-bi-še₃ ḡa₂-ḡa₂ sa₂ di-bi mu-e-zu, ‘Ninurta, right arm of the Great Mountain (= Enlil), you are his creation. You know how to establish and implement the decisions he pronounces’ (*Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta, 14–15); ^dnin-urta a₂ maḥ ^den-lil₂-la₂, ‘Ninurta, great force of Enlil’ (*Šu-Suen D*, tigi(?) to Ninurta, 36); ḡešgem-ti an-na, ‘(Ninurta,) trust of An’ (*Bur-Suen A*, adab to Ninurta, 3); gu-za-la an e-li-la-me-[en] / maš-gi-in su-ur₂ di-ne-re[-ne-me-en] / en pa₃-an-su-ra e-li-la[-me-en], ‘(Šulpa’e,) you are the throne-bearer of An and Enlil, the fierce official of the gods, the table-steward of Enlil’ (*Šulpa’e A*, 49–51, after *TCL* 15.3 syll.).

⁴³ P. Attinger has pointed out to me that this English translation could be seen to imply an imperfective verbal aspect, although the Sumerian form is perfective. Here and in similar instances (e.g. *Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursağa to Inana, 119; *Utu the hero*, 9–13; and others), I follow the recommendations of Alster (2005b: 209–10) on translating such verbal forms in Sumerian proverbs, where they are perhaps best understood as unmarked and timeless (see also *DGS* §15.4.2). This interpretation would also seem appropriate to descriptive praises of the gods in religious poetry.

⁴⁴ Differently van Dijk (1960: 38), repeated in Hallo and van Dijk (1968: 65): ‘Bei der Schicksalsbestimmung bestimmst du ihm das Schicksal.’ This would be the natural translation were it not for the comitative ‘-n.da-’. There are clear parallels for ‘nam tar’ with comitative ‘-da-’ meaning ‘to determine fate with s.o.’: see *Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 10 and *Ninlil A*, 2 (both quoted in the same paragraph above); further *Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursağa to Inana, 25–6; *Enlil A*, 164.

Individual gods are said to be beloved of or honoured by the others, and especially by the chief gods:

ki-ağ₂ ^den-lil-la₂, ‘(Bau,) beloved of Enlil’ (*Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 2); mi₂-du₁₁-ga diğir-re-e-ne ‘(Bau,) honoured by the gods’ (*Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 4); ki-ağ₂ an uraš-a, ‘(Inana,) beloved of An and Uraš’ (*Inana B*, 2); ama-ni ki-ağ₂, ‘(Ninġišzida,) beloved of his mother’ (*Ninġišzida A*, balbale, 4); dumu ki-ağ₂ an gal-la, ‘(Ninisina,) beloved child of great An’ (*Ninisina D*, 1 after CBS 14065); [^den-lil₂]-la(?) ħi-li ša₃-ga-na-me-en gu₂-da ša-mu-ri-in-la₂, ‘(Ninlil,) you are the joy of Enlil’s heart, he embraces you’ (*Ninlil A*, adab, 5); ^dnin-lil₂-la₂ ħi-li ša₃-ga-na-me-en ki-gal im¹-ma-ra-an-ağ₂, ‘(Ninurta,) you are the joy of Ninlil’s heart, she loves you greatly’ (*Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta, 34); en ki-ağ₂-ğ₂-ni-me-en, ‘(Nuska,) you are (Enlil’s) beloved lord’ (*Nuska A*, sergida, 7); ki-ağ₂ an-na-kam, ‘(Sadarnuna) is beloved of An’ (*Sadarnuna A*, 3); ^dsuen dumu ki-ağ₂ ša₃-za, ‘Suen, the son beloved of your (Enlil’s) heart’ (*Išme-Dagan F_A*, adab(?) to Enlil, 20’); a[n ^de]n-lil₂ ^den-ki ^dnin-ħur-sağ-ğ₂-ke₄ / ki uktim-zu-a mi₂ zi ša-ra-ne-ne, ‘An, Enlil, Enki, and Ninhursaga rightly honour you (Nanna) in the place of your creation’ (*Nanna O*, 7–8); ^dr nin-ħur⁷-sağ-ğ₂-ke₄ ki-ağ₂-ğ₂-ni za-e-me-en, ‘(Šulpa’e,) you are the beloved of Ninhursaga’ (*Šulpa’e A*, 14); dumu-sağ ^dsuen-ne₂ mi₂ du₁₁-ga, ‘(Utu,) the first-born son honoured by Suen’ (*Šulgi Q*, adab(?) to Utu, 10’); ^dnin-l[i]l₂-le ki-ağ₂, ‘(Utu,) beloved of Ninlil’ (H 180+, to Utu, 4’).

In these ways, hymns praise the individual deities by asserting their relevance to the other gods, and especially to the chief gods. The complementary element in hymnic praise is the relevance of deities to man—known collectively as the people (‘uğ₃’), the black-headed (‘sağ gegge’), or mankind (‘nam-lu₂-ulu₃’)—or the land (‘kalam’). Divine characteristics like justice, providence, and affection mark the relations not only between gods but also between gods and man:

si-sa₂-ra igi zi mu-ši-in-bar, ‘(Inana) looks favourably on the just’ (*Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursaga to Ninsiana, 119, after *SRT* 1); ^dutu lugal niğ₂ si-sa₂, ‘Utu, king of justice’ (*Šulgi Q*, adab(?) to Utu, 5’); ^dutu di-ku₅ mağ aia sağ gegge-ga, ‘Utu, great judge, father of the black-headed (people)’ (*Utu the hero*, 4).

gu₇ nağ-bi-še₃ im-da-kuš₂-u₃-de₃-en aia zi-bi za-e, ‘(Enki,) you concern yourself with the sustenance (of the people), you are their true father’ (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 19); ^r ^dnu ⁷-nam-nir sipa da-ri₂ kalam-ma, ‘Nunamnir (= Enlil), eternal shepherd of the land’ (*Šulgi G*,

adab to Enlil, 2); ^den-lil₂ sipa zi teš₂-pa la₂-a (for: teš₂-ba lu-a) / na-gada mas-su niĝ₂ zi-ġal₂-la-kam, 'Enlil, true shepherd of all that is teeming, is the shepherd and leader of what is alive' (*Enlil A*, 93–4, after KU 25); unu₃ uĝ₃ lu-a igi il₂-il₂-i, '(Hendursaĝa,) cowherd overseeing the teeming people' (*Hendursaĝa A*, 9); sipa saĝ gegge-ga šid-b[i] mu-e-zu, 'Shepherd (Ninĝišzida), you know how to count the black-headed (people)' (*Ninĝišzida A*, balbale, 12); uĝ₃ lu-a za-e lugal-bi, '(Ninurta,) you are the king of the teeming people' (*Ninurta H*, adab(?), obv.¹ 8); uĝ₃ ġar-ġar-ra-bi en aia-bi-me-en, 'You are the lord and father of the settled people' (*Išme-Dagan X*, to unnamed god, 24); sipa saĝ ge[gge]-ga, '(Utu,) shepherd of the black-headed (people)' (H 180+, to Utu, 6').

nin-ġu₁₀ sa₆-ga, 'My lady (Bau,) benevolent one' (*Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 1); ša₃-la₂ tuku arġuš₂ su₃ kalam-ma, '(Bau,) clement and compassionate one of the land' (*Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 8); en gal ga-ti-le ġeš tuku-me-en ki-¹ aġ₂¹ kalam-ma-me-en, '(Nanna,) you are attentive to offerings, you are beloved of the land' (*Išme-Dagan M*, adab to Nanna, B13); šudu₃ a-ra-zu(-a) ġeš tuku-me-en, 'I (Ninisina) listen to prayer and supplication' (*Ninisina A*, sergida, 135); sul ^dsuen šudu₃-de₃ ġeš tuk[u . . .], 'Young Suen who listens to prayers' (*Gungunum B*, to Suen, B8), ¹lugal ša₃¹-la₂-su₃ kur-kur-ra-me-en, '(Šulpa'e,) you are the clement king of the land' (*Šulpa'e A*, 83).

But the gods also have responsibilities that are specific to mankind. One is to give life ('ti.l'):

nin a-zu gal saĝ gegge-ga lu₂ ti-l[e] lu₂ u₃⁴⁵-du₂, '(Bau,) great physician of the black-headed, who keeps people alive and brings them to birth' (*Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 6); nam-lu₂¹-ulu₃ u₃-du₂ ti-le i₃-ġal₂, 'Breeding and life of men are (in your power, Enki)' (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 33–4); en ud ti^{na-ap}, '(Enlil,) lord, light of (?) life' (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 6); aia ^diškur en ku₃-ġal₂ an ki kalam-e' zi š[um₂], 'Father Iškur, lord, canal-inspector of heaven and earth who gives life to the land' (*Ur-Ninurta F*, adab(?) to Iškur, B15); en aia ^uugu₆-ni ^dnu-nam-nir-gen₇ ti mud (var.: ti u₃-du₂) e-ne-da ġal₂, 'Like his own father Nunamnir (= Enlil), it is in the power of the lord (Nergal) to create life' (*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 18, after SRT 12); nam-ti u₃-du₂ za-da ša-mu-un-ġal₂, '(Enki) let life and breeding be in your power, (Ninĝišzida)' (*Ninĝišzida A*, balbale, 17); nin ti-la ug₅-ga zi kalam-ma šu du₈, '(Ninisina,) lady who brings the dead to life,⁴⁶ holding the life of the land' (*Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 21); aia-zu ^dsuen-gen₇ zi ti-le ki ba-

⁴⁵ The 'lu₂' and most of the 'u₃' that were copied by S. Langdon (PBS 10/2.14) are no longer visible on the CDLI-image of CBS 7184 (P262216).

⁴⁶ See RIA s.v. Nin-tin-uġa, Nin-tila-uġa.

e-a-aĝ₂, ‘(Numušda,) like your father Suen you like to let life live’ (*Sin-iqišam* A, adab(?) to Numušda, 31).

Once alive, man desires material happiness. Sjöberg (1962) has noted the loose synonymy of several terms employed in this connection: ‘giri₁₇-zal’ (≈‘prosperity’), ‘nam-ĥe₂’ and ‘ĥe₂-ġal₂’ (≈‘abundance’), and ‘ĥi-li’ (≈‘plenty’). Sjöberg also observes that prosperity is a gift particularly of the (light of the) moon god Nanna/Suen, the lunar phases (especially the crescent) being associated with fertility:

sul ^dsuen iti₆ niġ₂ giri₁₇-zal uġ₃-e u₆ mu-e, ‘Youthful Suen, the people marvel at the moonlight of prosperity’ (*Nanna J*, ululumama, 25); mu nam-ĥe₂-a-ka (var.: mu nam-ĥe₂-ke₄) šu peš-peš-e-de₃ / a-aštub^{ku6} ĥe₂-ġal₂ nu-silig-ge, ‘(Nanna,) spreading years of abundance, not letting the early flood of abundance cease’ (*Nanna L*, sernamgala, 22–4); kur-ra du-da-ne gi-ir-za-la e-da-ni, ‘(Nanna,) born in the mountain, emerging in prosperity’ (*Nanna M*, 7, after VS 2.1 syll.); buru₁₄ izim gal ĥi-li si-a-ba kalam ši-i[m]-ši-ĥu[l₂]-x? / uġ₃ saġ gegge-ga aia-bi-gen₇ igi-bi [š]u-mu-a-ši-ġa[l₂], ‘The land indeed rejoices in the harvest and the great celebration full of plenty: the people, the black-headed look upon you (Nanna) as their father’ (*Išme-Dagan M*, adab to Nanna, B11–12).

But prosperity is also a general attribute of the gods, and kings pray for it:

ĥe₂-ġal₂ nam-ĥe-a dalla ša-mu-na-ni-e₃, ‘(Enki,) you splendidly bring forth rich abundance for (the king)’ (NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki, 43); e₂ [d^e]n-lil₂-la₂ kur ĥe₂-ġal₂-la-kam, ‘The temple of Enlil is a mountain of abundance’ (*Enlil A*, 54 after KU 25); uġ₃ šar₂-ra-bi ša₃ ĥul₂-la u₄ ul-li₂-a-aš bi₂-ib-ak-e-en / e₂ diġir gal-gal-e-ne izim ab-ġar-re-en giri₁₇-zal ši-bi₂-du₈-du₈-un, ‘(Haia,) you keep all the people happy forever, you hold festivals in the temples of the great gods, you indeed spread prosperity’ (*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 47–8); me giri₁₇-zal šu daġal(?) nu-u₈-geg-e ma-ra-an-šum₂, ‘(Nanaja,) the nugig (= Inana) has generously(?) given you divine powers of prosperity’ (*Išbi-Erra C*, tigi to Nanaja, 24); ^dnanše lagaš^{ki}-a ĥe₂-ġal₂-la šu-mu-un-da-an-peš-e, ‘With Nanše, one spreads abundance in Lagaš’ (*Nanše A*, 33); ama ^dnin-lil₂ diġir me giri₁₇-zal nam-ĥe₂ a ru-a-me-en, ‘Mother Ninlil, you are the goddess who dedicates(?)’⁴⁷ the divine powers of prosperity and abundance’ (*Ninlil A*,

⁴⁷ Wilcke (1973: 7): ‘Göttin mit den prächtigen göttlichen Kräften, du bist es, die Überfluß erzeugt hat’ (nam-ĥe₂ a-ru-a-me-en); *ETCSL*: ‘goddess who provides the divine powers of joy and prosperity’ (nam-ĥe₂-a ru-a-me-en).

adab, 10); lugal abzu-a ku₄-ra-ni u₄ ħe₂-ġal₂-am₃ ġe₆ giri₁₇-zal-am₃, 'The king (Ninurta)'s entrance in the Abzu is a day of abundance, a night of prosperity' (*Ninurta B*, sergida, B5).

mu ħe₂-ġal₂ bala u₄-su₃-da / ^dur-(^dnin-urta)-ra mu-na-an-šum₂, '(An) has given to Ur-Ninurta years of abundance and lasting rule' (*Ur-Ninurta E*, adab to An, 22-3); aia¹ ^den-ki ^diš-me-^dda-gan nam-lugal [...] bala ħe₂-ġal₂-la saġ-eš₂ [rig₇-...], 'Father Enki, bestow kingship [...] (and) a prosperous reign (upon) Išme-Dagan!' (*Išme-Dagan D*, adab to Enki, B29); ^den-lil₂-le igi ħul₂-ħul₂-la-ni e-ne-ra u₃-mu-un-ši-in-bar / bala-a-na u₄ du₁₀ mu giri₁₇-zal nam-ti-la ħa-ma-ab-taĥ-e, 'When Enlil looks at him (= Ur-Ninurta) with joy, may he add pleasant days and years of prosperity (and) life to his rule!' (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 43-4); ^dur-ninurta-ra ħe₂-ġal₂ zi su₃-ud-ġal₂ saġ-e-eš mu-ni-rig₇, '(Inana,) you have bestowed abundance and a long life on Ur-Ninurta' (*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 40); mu giri₁₇-zal nam-ti niġ₂ du₁₀-ga [x x ħ]a-ba-ni-ib₂-sud-re₆, 'May (Ninurta) prolong the years of prosperity (and) a pleasant life [...] (for Bur-Suen)' (*Bur-Suen A*, adab to Ninurta, 24); ^du[r]-^dnin-urta-ra bala mu [giri₁₇]-zal-la mu-un-ne-taĥ, '(Ninurta,) for Ur-Ninurta you have added years of prosperity to reign' (*Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta, 41); ti niġ₂ du₁₀ bala du₁₀ mu giri₁₇-zal-la za-e e₃-mu-na-ra-ab, 'Make a pleasant life, a pleasant reign, and years of prosperity emerge for (Išme-Dagan)!' (*Išme-Dagan Q*, adab(?) to Nuska, B18 = 22); bala su₃-ud nam-ħe₂-a im-ma-ni-in-pa₃-de₃, '(Suen) calls (Ibbi-Suen) to a long reign of abundance' (*Ibbi-Suen C*, adab to Suen, 15, 20).

Thus the Sumerian hymns praise the gods both for their importance in the pantheon, in particular their place at the side of the chief gods An and Enlil, and for their importance to mankind, where the emphasis lies on their power to give life and to provide prosperity.

Legitimation is an important aim of the *laudes* of Sumerian hymns. That is to say, the singers do not only state that the god has a particular function, a particular relevance to gods and men, but they also explain that the god holds his important position thanks to higher authority. Thus almost every hymn contains a section that I will refer to as the *elatio*: the elevation of the individual god by one or several of the chief gods. In some cases the *elatio* explains that the chief gods have attributed to the individual god the very characteristics for which he is being praised:

^den-lil₂ lugal kur-kur-ra[]

^dnu-nam-nir en nam tar-r[e]

eš₃ nibru^{ki} dur an ki-a-ka gal-bi bi₂-in[-du₁₁(?)]

e₂-kur za-gin₃-na mi-ni-im-maḥ-en ḡesgem(?) x[]
 sa-par₃¹ kala-ga ^dnu-nam-nir-ra[-me-en]
 diḡir-gub-ba e₂-kur-ra<<-ka>> šuku šum₂-mu ḡeštin(?) za-x-[]

Enlil, the king of the lands,

Nunamnir who decides the fates,

has [spoken] greatly⁴⁸ in the shrine of Nippur, the bond of heaven and earth,

he has exalted you (Bau,) in the shining Ekur . . . [] (unclear)

you are the mighty net of Nunamnir,

the guardian, distributing rations in the Ekur, wine . . . (?) []

(*Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 9–14)

Enlil elevates Bau in his temple Ekur, and she serves him there.⁴⁹ In other cases the *elatio* is very brief or very general and serves only to introduce further epithets of the god. It can also take the form of a participial construction. A few examples among many:

aia du₂-da-zu an lugal-e

me niḡ₂ galam saḡ-e-eš mu-ri-in-rig₇

King An, the father who bred you (Bau),

has bestowed on you the divine powers, an artful thing.⁵⁰

(*Gudea A*, tigi to Bau, 10–11)

abzu eridu^{ki}-ga me šu ba-ni-in-ti

aia-ni ^den-ki-ke₄ saḡ-e-eš mu-ni-rig₇

nam-en nam-lugal-la šu-ni-še₃ mu-u₈-ḡar

In the Abzu, in Eridu, (Inana) has received the divine powers,

her father Enki has given them to her,

he has placed the objects of lordship and kingship in her hand.

(*Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursaga to Ninsiana, 22–4, after SRT 1)

⁴⁸ See *ELS* §215.

⁴⁹ Compare *Šulpa'e A*, 34–9: 'You, hero Šulpa'e, are the king of the orchard and garden, the green reed-bed, the quadrupeds of the wide high steppe, the cattle, the creatures of the plain. An, the king of the gods, has granted them to you (šu-za im-ma-an-šum₂), he has granted them to you—and you are their king.'

⁵⁰ The alternative translation of 'me niḡ₂ galam' as 'die alles übersteigenden me' (Farber-Flügge 1973: 156), thus also Römer (2001: 7), is based ultimately on: ^{ḡes}galam = *simmiltu*, 'ladder', in Hh VIIA 107 (*MSL* 6 92), see Landsberger and Güterbock (1937–9: 55), Falkenstein (1959: 75). In this context it seems preferable to translate 'galam' as 'artful', see *CAD* s.v. *naklu* lex., esp. in view of the association of 'me galam' with Enki and his intelligence, compare the incipit: en me galam-ma umu₈ ki ḡar-ra (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 1).

nam-sugal₇-maḥ-a-ni mu-ra-an-šum₂ en^d<nu>nam-n[ir-re]
 ḡidru ku₃ šu-za ma-ra-ni-in-ge-en mu-zu dalla bi₂-in-e₃

Lord Nunamnir (= Enlil) has given his great viziership to you (Nuska),
 he has placed the holy sceptre firmly in your hand and made your
 renown radiantly manifest.

(*Išme-Dagan Q*, adab(?) to Nuska, A4–5)

sul^dsuen u₄ ḡeš-ḥe₂ ʿe₃ ʾ-a⁵¹-še₃ ʿen-lil₂-le il₂-la

Youthful Suen, light elevated by Enlil to emerge in the firmament.

(*Ibbi-Suen A*, tigi to Suen, 2)

gal-zu nu-u₈-ge₁₇-ge nin kur-kur-ra zi-de₃-eš-še₃ pa₃-da

(Nanaja,) intelligent one, rightly chosen by the great ruler
 (= Inana) to direct the lands.

(*Išbi-Erra C*, tigi to Nanaja, 3)

The same elevation was granted to deities who were not traditionally prominent in the pantheon, as can be seen in the cases of Marduk and Numušda, who so far each appear only once in the Old Babylonian Sumerian corpus:

diḡir gal-gal-e-ne ib₂-diri-ga ḡidru lugal ḡarza diḡir-re-e-ne
 si-sa₂-sa₂-eš-a mu-ra-an-taḥ
 ʿen-lil₂-le nam-lugal x an ki-bi-da-ke₄
 nam-še₃ mu-ni-in-tar za₃-ša₄ la-ba-a[n]-tu[ku]

Having made (you, Marduk) superior over the great gods, (An) has
 added for you the royal sceptre
 (and) the ordinances of the gods, for directing them,
 Enlil has decided a destiny of kingship in . . . (?) of heaven and earth and
 let (you) have no equal.

(*Abi-ešuḥ A*, to Marduk, 8–9)⁵²

⁵¹ While the photograph of UM 29-16-43 (Sjöberg 1970-1: 174) shows ‘e₃-a’, these two signs are for the most part no longer visible in the CDLI-image of the tablet (P256653).

⁵² This hymn, composed for the late OB king Abi-ešuḥ (1711–1684 bc), caps the rise of Marduk in the Babylonian pantheon: see Sommerfeld (1982: 108–9). The theological implications of this passage have recently been discussed by Lambert (2013: 259–60). It is important to realize that, as shown by the material compiled in the present chapter, such episodes are conventional in Old Babylonian Sumerian (and Akkadian) religious poetry (and some of their Hittite adaptations), and that An(u) and Enlil are usually the gods who grant the promotion. The conclusion must be that, as proposed by Lambert, the deity in question is being advanced to an important

^dnu-nam-nir en nam-tar-tar-re
 kur niĝ₂ daĝal-la-ba mu-zu im-mi-in-maḥ
 iri nam-ḥe₂ ki du₁₀-ga ġar-ra
 ka-zal-lu^{ki} kur ḥe₂-ġal₂-la ki-šu-peš mi-ri-in-[z]u (gl. *ma-ḥa-az-ka u₂-
 we-di-k[a?]*)

Nunamnir (= Enlil), the lord who decides the fates,
 has elevated your name in the wide land.

The city of abundance, founded in a pleasant place,

Kazallu, the mountain of abundance, he has caused you to make known
 as your cult place.

(*Sin-iqišam A*, adab(?) to Numušta, 35–8)⁵³

These examples show—and it is generally true—that the verbs denoting the act of giving or receiving are in the perfective form (*hamtu*), indicating that the action is completed.⁵⁴ In that sense the *elatio* lends a mythological depth to the hymn. Yet the *elatio* is not expanded into a narrative interlude, a fuller account of how the god acquired his powers and what he did next. Such expansions are, however, attested in a few of the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns (see Chapter 2).

Another characteristic feature of the *laudes* of Sumerian hymns is hyperbole, which can seem to exaggerate the importance of a particular deity at the expense of the others.⁵⁵ First, there are the universals of hymnic praise. The influence of each god is said to extend over heaven and earth ('an ki'). Variations of this formula occur in nearly every hymn and apply to all the gods. A few examples:

position in the pantheon but does not take over from An(u) and Enlil, who in all instances remain supreme.

⁵³ Numušta was the god of the town of Kazallu. This hymn reflects the attention paid to his cult by king Sin-iqišam of Larsa, possibly for political reasons: see Brisch (2007: 49–50).

⁵⁴ The *elatio* in Akkadian hymns correspondingly employs the preterite tense, see Ch. 2.

⁵⁵ 'Bezeichnend vor allem für die Hymnen und wiederum verbunden mit einem Verlust an Verständlichkeit für uns und an wünschenswerter Präzision ist ihre Neigung, z.B. der jeweils gepriesenen Gottheit eine hervorragende Stellung unter den Göttern bzw. die völlige Unabhängigkeit von ihnen, ferner die alleinige Sorge für das Bestehen der menschlichen Ordnung und für das Gedeihen von Tieren und Pflanzen zuzuschreiben' (Krecher 1978: 119). This tendency verges on what some historians of religion would call henotheism, as described by Versnel (2011: 296–304), especially in expressions of divine 'uniqueness'.

gu₂-gal an ki, '(Enlil,) foremost (in) heaven and earth' (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 3); ^dutu-gen₇ diġir gal-gal-e-ne-er / en an ki-a ša-mu-ne-il₂-le-[en], 'You, lord (Enki), rise in heaven and earth like Utu for the great gods' (NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki, 37–8); ĠA₂ dub-ba e₂-gal an ki-a, '(Haia,) palace archivist of heaven and earth' (*Rim-Sin B*, adab(?) to Haia, 4); an men saġ-ġa₂ mu-ni-in-ma-al / ki^{kuš}e-sir₂ me-ri-ġa₂ mu-ni-in-si (var.: -si₃), '(Enlil) has made the heavens into the crown on my (Inana's) head, he has placed the earth as a sandal on my foot' (*Inana F*, balbale(?), 10–11);⁵⁶ aia ^diškur en ku₃-ġal₂ an ki, 'Father Iškur, lord, canal inspector of heaven and earth' (*Ur-Ninurta F*, adab(?) to Iškur, B15); lugal me¹ an ki-bi-da-ke₄^{sic} ab-ur₄-ra, 'King (Marduk) who gathers the divine powers of heaven and earth' (*Abi-Ešuh A*, to Marduk, 1); ^dnergal an ki za₃ til-bi-še₃ nam-maḥ-a-ni dul-la, 'Nergal, whose greatness covers heaven and earth as far as their limits' (*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 11); lugal ^dnin-ġeš-zi-[da] an ki-a nir-ġa[l₂], 'King Ningišzida, lordly in heaven and earth' (*Hymn to Ningišzida*, 7'); nin ni₂-zu ʾan¹ ki-a ša-mu-un-ri, '(Ninisina,) you indeed impose your reverence in heaven and earth' (*Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 29); ama ^dnin-lil₂ an ki-a i-ši-u₅, 'Mother Ninlil, you indeed ride over heaven and earth' (*Ninlil A*, adab, 28); lugal^{ġeš-tu⁹}ġestu daġal an ki-a, '(Ninurta,) king (with) broad intelligence in heaven and earth' (*Šulgi T*, tigi(?) to Ninurta, 14); u₄ an ki, '(Suen,) light of heaven and earth' (*Šu-Suen F*, adab(?) to Suen, 9); an ki lugal-bi na-nam, '(Suen) is indeed the king of heaven and earth!' (*Ibbi-Suen C*, adab to Suen, 5); [su]l^dutu en gal an ʾki¹ šu₂ maḥ-a-ni za₃ nu-sa₂, 'Valiant Utu, great lord covering heaven and earth, whose greatness is unrivalled' (H 180+, to Utu, 44').

A second topos are the 'divine powers', an approximate translation of the Sumerian term 'me'. These are sometimes allotted by the chief gods in the *elatio*; at other times they are simply attributes held by the deity:

me maḥ-a šu du₇, '(Bau) who perfects the great powers' (*Išme-Dagan B*, adab to Bau, 3); me šar₂-ra-ba dur₂ ġar (...) me gal-gal-la šu du₇, '(Enlil,) placing his seat on all the powers (...) perfecting the great powers' (*Išme-Dagan H*, adab to Enlil, 1–2); ^dhendur-saġ-ġa₂ me-zu maḥ-am₃ lu₂ al nu-um-me, '(Hendursaga,) your powers are great, no one can claim them' (*Hendursaga A*, 12 and refrain); ša₃-zu-a ki-sikil ^dinana-ra me mu-na-ni-in-šum₂-mu-uš, 'In your (Nippur's) midst, (Enlil and Ninlil) have bestowed the powers upon the maiden Inana' (*Išme-Dagan K*, to Inana, 43); me šar₂-ra dalla e₃, '(Martu,) radiantly

⁵⁶ See West (1997: 359–60), Metcalf (2013: 259–60) on this image.

manifesting all the powers' (*Martu A*, *sergida*, 5); [n]in me¹ nun-na, 'Lady of the princely powers, (Nanaja)' (*Išbi-Erra C*, *tigi* to Nanaja, 1); me-zu me maḥ-am₃ an-ne₂ šum₂-ma-a-am₃, '(Nanna,) your powers are great powers, they have been given by An' (*Nanna H*, *adab*, A5); lu₂ zu me diġir-re-e-ne, '(Nergal,) the one who knows the powers of the gods' (*Nergal B*, 14); ^dnin-urta me ul dili ša-ba-ak, 'Ninurta alone exerts the eternal powers' (*Šu-Suen D*, *tigi*(?) to Ninurta, 42); me gal 50-e šu du₇-a, '(Nisaba) perfecting the fifty great powers' (*Nisaba A*, 5, after *UET* 6.583); me-zu me [k]al(?) -kal,⁵⁷ 'Your (Numušda's) powers are very precious powers' (*Sin-iqušam A*, *adab*(?) to Numušda, 34); me nam-nun-na-ṛni¹ an-da gu₂-la₂-am₃, 'The powers of (Suen's) princeliness embrace heaven' (*Ibbi-Suen A*, *tigi* to Suen, 6); en me gal-gal-la, '(Utu,) lord of the great powers' (*Šulgi Q*, *adab*(?) to Utu, 50'-51').

Might in heaven and earth and possession of the 'me' are attributes of all the gods. But a number of common hymnic expressions ascribe some kind of exclusive attribute to the deity. This form of praise, which can be called hyperbolic, is particularly important for the understanding both of the Old Babylonian pantheon and of the appropriation of Old Babylonian hymnic poetry by other cultures that had different religious priorities (see Chapter 3 on the Hittites).

For instance, various gods are said to 'have no rival' ('gaba-ri' / 'gaba-šu-ġar nu-tuku') among the others:

diġir na-me gaba-ri-ni-še₃ nu-gub-bu, 'No god can rival (Inana)' (*Išme-Dagan K*, to Inana, 6); ^dinana maḥ-di an ki-a gaba-ri nu-tuku-me-en, 'August Inana, you have no rival in heaven and earth' (*Ur-Ninurta D*, *adab* to Inana, 12); aia (. . .) gaba-ġi₄ nu-um-mi-in-tuku 'Father (An) (. . .) let him (Martu) have no rival' (*Martu A*, *sergida*, 28-9); gaba-ġi₄ nu-mu-ri-in-tuku, '(Enlil) did not let you (Ninurta) have a rival' (*Ur-Ninurta C*, *adab* to Ninurta, 33); e₂-kur-re e₂ ^den-lil₂-la₂-ṛka¹ / ^dsuen gaba-šu-ġar nu-mu-ni-tuku-am₃, 'Suen, having no rival in the Ekur, the temple of Enlil' (*Nanna H*, *adab*, A3-4); sul gaba-ri nu-tuku, 'Young (Utu) who has no rival' (*H* 180+, to Utu, 7').

Similarly, each hymn praises its particular god for being in some respect or absolutely 'superior' ('diri'),⁵⁸ 'foremost' (*IGI.DU*),⁵⁹ 'surpassing' ('za₃-dib'),⁶⁰ and sometimes even 'unique' ('dili'):

⁵⁷ Thus after Dupret (1974: 332 n. 34).

⁵⁸ Literally 'greater than'.

⁵⁹ See CAD s.v. *ašaridu* lex. and *ABZL* commentary to no. 233 on the reading *IGI.DU/palil*.

⁶⁰ See Falkenstein (1950: 122-3 ad 5).

[] maḥ za₃-dib, ‘(An,) great, surpassing one’ (*Lipit-Eštar C*, adab to An, 1); IGI.DU diġir-re-e-ne, ‘(Enki,) foremost among the gods’ (*Išme-Dagan E*, balbale to Enki, A4 = 6); me-bi me-a diri ‘The powers (of the Abzu, the dwelling of Enki) are greater than the (other) powers’ (*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 28); an ki-a diri, ‘(Enlil,) superior in heaven and earth’ (*Enlil A*, 10); IGI.D[U] ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne, ‘(Enlil,) foremost among the Anuna’ (*Bur-Suen B*, adab to Enlil, A2 after Ni 4050); nam-sul-la diri-ga-am₃, ‘(Inana) is superior by (her) youthful vigour’ (*Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursaġa to Ninsiana, 131 and 225, after SRT 1⁶¹); an ki-e diri, ‘(Inana,) superior over heaven and earth’ (*Lipit-Eštar H*, uadi, 2); [i]n-nin₉ za₃-dib ^da-nun-ke₄-ne, ‘Lady (Inana,) surpassing among the Anuna’ (*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 1); ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne gu₂ ġeš ma-ra-an-ġar-re-eš / u₃-du₂-da-ta nin banda₃^{da}-me-en / ^da-nun-na diġir gal-gal-e-ne a-gen₇ ba-e-ne-diri-ga, ‘(Inana,) the Anuna have submitted to you: from birth you were the junior lady, how you are (now) superior to the Anuna, the great gods.’⁶² (*Inana B*, 113–15); [z]a-e maḥ-me-en dili-zu-ni maḥ-me-en, ‘You (Lugalerra) are great, you alone are great’ (*Ibbi-Suen B*, sernamġala to Meslamtaea and Lugalġirra, A37); ur-saġ nam-sul-la za₃ dib-ba, ‘Hero (Lulal), surpassing in vigour’ (*Lulal A*, serġida, 1); IGI.DU ^dnun-gal-e-ne, ‘Marduk, foremost among the great divine princes’ (*Abi-Ešulġ A*, to Marduk, 2); ušum za₃-dib, ‘(Martu,) surpassing dragon’ (*Martu B*, uadi, 2); me-zu me maḥ-am₃ [me-a di]ri-ga-am₃ / [^dnan]še[?] me-zu me na-me nu-un-ga-an-da-sa₂, ‘Your powers are great, superior to [the other powers, Nan]še(?), no powers can rival your powers’ (*Nanše A*, 250–1); diri sul gal-e-ne, ‘(Nergal,) superior among the great young men (= gods)⁶³’ (*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 10); diġir IGI.DU nam-sul-la za₃-dib, ‘Foremost god (Ningišzida,) surpassing in vigour’ (*Ningišzida E*, 12); me diri-ga za-ar ma-ra-an-ri, ‘(Your father An) has imposed superior powers on you (Ninisina)’ (*Ninisina D*, 8, after CBS 14065); diri ^da-nun-ke₄-ne / [] IGI.DU diġir-re-e-ne, ‘(Ninurta,) superior among the Anuna, [...] foremost among the gods’ (*Bur-Suen A*, adab to Ninurta, 2–3); nam-nir nam-za₃-dib mu-ra-an-šum₂, ‘(Enlil) has given lordship and a surpassing nature to you (Ninurta)’ (*Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta, 33); za₃-dib IGI.DU diġir-re-e-ne, ‘(Nuska,) surpassing, foremost among the

⁶¹ The sense of the variant: nam-sul-am₃ diri-[] (Ni 9802+4363) would be unclear.

⁶² A recently published extract of *Inana B* (Robson 2005) presents the variant: ^da-nun-na-ke₄-e-ne ^ugu₆ be₂-diri-NE, on which see Attinger (2006: 14). Compare: me-e dim₃-me-er-e-ne ša-mu-un-na-diri-ge-en / ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne ša-mu-un-na-diri-ge-en, ‘I (Inana) am superior to the gods, I am superior to the Anuna-gods’ (YBC 9862, 10–11 // VS 2.28, obv. 8–9, ed. Cohen 1988: 642–9).

⁶³ Following Römer (1965: 103).

gods' (*Nuska A*, *sergida*, 18); *na[m]-nin-a dib-ba-am₃*, 'Sadarnuna) is surpassing in ladyship' (*Sadarnuna A*, 2).

To exalt one god and to bestow the same or similar praises upon a different god in a different hymn is perhaps a common feature of polytheistic religious poetry in general. But in the Sumerian hymns the liberty of the singer is not total. The hyperbole has limits, for the gods An and Enlil at all times reign supreme. They are the only gods who are never the object of an *elatio*; they elevate others but are never themselves elevated. Nor are they said to have parents. The use of certain hyperbolic expressions is also restricted to An and Enlil. Thus 'dili' ('alone', 'unique'), while only rarely used of other gods, is said emphatically of An and Enlil:

dili diġir-re-ne me gal-gal-la i₃-me-en
 an lugal dili diġir-re(-ne me gal-gal-la i₃-me-en),
 I alone among the gods am the one of the great powers
 I, An the king, alone among the gods am the one of the great powers.
 (*Ur-Ninurta E*, adab to An, 42-3)

dili-ni⁶⁴ diġir maḥ
 (Enlil,) the only great god.
 (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 5)

[e]n an-ki-še₃ dili-ni dib
 Lord (Enlil) passing alone over heaven and earth.
 (*Bur-Suen B*, adab to Enlil, A1 after Ni 4050)

ᵐan-na⁷ dili nun-bi ki-a ušumgal-bi
 (Enlil) alone is the prince of the sky, the dragon of the earth.
 (*Enlil A*, 100, after KU 25)

an ki niġen₂-na-bi dili-zu¹-ni maḥ-me-en⁶⁵
 In the entirety of heaven and earth you (Enlil) alone are great.
 (*Išme-Dagan H*, adab to Enlil, 9)

⁶⁴ See SG §12.14.4.12 on the construction 'dili-ni/e', 'he/she alone', 'dili-zu-ni/e', 'you alone'.

⁶⁵ N 5869 (P279879) seems to present a variant: [] niġen₂-na-bi-ᵐše₃⁷ di[li²]-zu-ni maḥ-me-e[n].

dili^{li}-zu¹(DU)-ni maḥ-me // e-di-še-ka ši₂-ra-ta

You (Nunamnir = Enlil) alone are great.

(VS 2.89 obv.[?] 7' // 9')

(‘dili’ applied by extension to Nuska, the vizier of Enlil:)

an ki šu₂-a kur niḡen₂-na-ba dili-zu-ni maḥ-me-en

In the extent of heaven and earth, in the entirety of the land you alone
(Nuska,) are great.

(Išme-Dagan Q, adab(?) to Nuska, A11)⁶⁶

The Moon-god is sometimes said to be ‘uniquely great’ in the sky, perhaps referring to his radiant appearance there:

^dsuen en an-na dili-zu-ne maḥ-me-en

Suen, lord, in the sky you alone are great.

(Nanna L, 20)

nir-ḡal₂ ušum dili diḡir pa e₃ [. . .],

Lord (Suen), unique dragon, god who emerges [. . .].

(Gungunum B, to Suen, B4)⁶⁷

Only Inana and Ninlil, the wives of An and Enlil, come close to their spouses. Inana in particular is frequently the object of hyperbolic praise:⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Compare, in contemporary royal building inscriptions (references are to *RIM*), a dedication of king Išme-Dagan to Enlil from Nippur beginning: ^rd¹en-lil₂ an ki-še₃ lugal-am₃ dili-ni diḡir-ra-am₃ ‘(For) Enlil, who is king over heaven and earth, who alone is god’ (E4.1.4.6). When Sin-kašid renovated the Eana-temple for An and Inana in Uruk, he dedicated the cones to: an lugal diḡir-re-ne, ‘An, king of the gods’ (E4.4.1.7), a formula also used by king Anam when he restored the same temple (E4.4.6.3).

⁶⁷ Again the evidence from contemporary royal inscriptions may be compared: King Šu-ilišu addresses the Moon-god Nanna-Suen in hyperbolic terms as he commemorates the construction of a standard in his city of Ur: ^dnanna nir-ḡal₂ an ki-a dumu nun zi ^den-lil₂-la₂ en dili-ni an ki-še₃ diḡir-re-ne-er za₃ dib-ba, ‘(For) Nanna, noble in heaven and earth, true princely son of Enlil, the lord who uniquely surpasses the gods in heaven and earth’ (E4.1.2.2); Nanna is also addressed as: en dili-ni diḡir pa e₃-a, ‘Unique lord, resplendent god’, by King Iddin-Dagan in another inscription from Ur (E4.1.3.2). Compare perhaps also the Moon-god’s common name ^ddili-im₂-babbar₂, which could be interpreted as meaning ‘Gleaming one who hastens on alone’ (see *RIA* s.v. Mondgott A.I. §2.3).

⁶⁸ This will prove relevant to the discussion of Aphrodite and her depiction in the *Theogony* of Hesiod, see Ch. 7.

an sikil-la dili-ni nam-mi-in-gub

In pure heaven (Inana) has been made to stand alone.

(*Iddin-Dagan A*, sernamursağa to Ninsiana, 80)

in-nin za-e maḥ-me-en igi-zu-še₃ na-me nu-dib-be₂

Lady (Inana), you are great, no one can pass before you.

(*Inana C*, 215, after Ni 9801)

za-e maḥ-me-en mu-zu ar₂-re-eš 𐎶dib¹ dili-zu-ne maḥ-me-en

You (Inana) are great, your name is beyond praise, you alone are great.

(*Inana C*, 218, after Ni 9801)⁶⁹

^dinana nin me šar₂-ra-me-en diğir nu-mu-e-da-sa₂

^dnin-e₂-gal-la ki-ur₃-zu mu-un-ğal₂ nam-maḥ-za⁷⁰ ga-am₃-du₁₁

Inana, you are the lady of all the divine powers, no god equals you,
Ninegala, you dwelling is there, let me tell of your greatness!

(refrain of *Inana D*)

But even in such hyperbole, An and Enlil often remain the essential point of reference:

an lugal-da za₃ mu-un-de₃-ša₄⁷¹ nam mu-un-di-ni-ib-tar-re

^de[n-l]il₂-gen₇ ka-ta e₃-a-zu ki-bi-še₃ al-ğa₂-ğa₂

You (Inana) equal An, you determine the fate there with him,
your utterance is as well founded as (that of) Enlil.

(*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 10–11)

an lugal-da me ba-a-me-[en]

^den-lil₂-gen₇ za₃-ge₄ si-a-me-en

You (Inana) allot the powers with king An,
like Enlil you are established.

(*Inana A*, 13–14, after SRT 9)

⁶⁹ The second part of this verse is quoted at the bottom of col. II of CBS 15203 (P269759), a substantial and until recently unpublished post-OB version of *Inana C* with extensive Akkadian glosses, see Michalowski (1998: 70 n. 17). While the previously cited verse 215 seems to be glossed as: igi-zu-še₃ na-me [...]/a-na pa-ni-ki [...], the Akkadian translation of the 'dili'-predication in 218 appears to be missing.

⁷⁰ Some mss. write -zu, see Behrens (1998: 74 n. 97) and ELS ex. 176.

⁷¹ Same phrase in *Inana C*, 3 (/it-ti a-nim ra-bi-im ši-it-<nu>-na-at) and *Iddin-Dagan D*, to Ninisina, 27.

nin an-ra diri-ga a-ba ki-za ba-an-tum₃

Lady (Inana) superior to An,⁷² who could take away from your realm?

(*Inana B*, 59)

diġir ur-saġ-ĜA₂ ʾšu¹ bi₂-in-ġar me-zu an-na mu-un-diri-dam

(Inana,) you attend the hero, making your powers superior in the heavens.⁷³

(*Inana E*, tigi, 9, 11)

kur gal-da za₃ [ša₄]

(Ninlil,) equaling the Great Mountain (= Enlil).

(*Ninlil A*, adab, 1 = *Bur-Suen B*, adab to Enlil, A10)

an-r[a] diri-ga-me-en

an lugal-e šid du₃-mu-na-ab

nam tar-r[e] nam mu-un-di-ni-ib-tar-re ^dnergal-<<ka>>me-en

You are superior to An.

Do the counting for An the king!

As for determining fate, you determine it with him, you are Nergal!

(*Nergal B*, 37–9)

Nergal, the subject of the last example, is one of those gods who are sometimes called ‘junior Enlil’ (^den-lil₂-banda₃) or who are given ‘Enlilship’ (^den-lil₂):⁷⁴

⁷² Thus also Attinger (2012a: 5). Zgoll (1997: 363), noting the exact parallelism with a preceding verse: nin kur-ra diri-ga a-ba ki-za ba-an-tum₃, ‘Lady (Inana) superior to the land, who could take away from your realm?’ (*Inana B*, 42), argues that ‘heaven’, not the god An, is meant here. Yet in the recently published poem *Inana and An*, Inana challenges An and eventually robs him of the Eana (his temple in Uruk), leading him to exclaim (D41–2): ^dinana a-na-am₃ bi₂-in-ak ġa₂-e bi₂-in-diri-ga, ‘What has Inana done, making it greater than what I (have done)?’ (uncertain, following a suggestion by P. Attinger; see further Brown and Zólyomi 2001: 152 n. 21). There is also the obscure passage: nin an ^den-lil₂-da diri-[g]a (*Inana C*, 113, after Ni 9801), which has been translated both as ‘Lady, through An (and) Enlil surpassing’ (Sjöberg 1975a: 189) and as ‘größer als An und Enlil’ (Wilcke 1993: 48 n. 87). ‘diri’ is not usually construed with the comitative, see Balke (2008: 61). Hallo and van Dijk (1968: 73) give further parallels for the expression ‘superior to An’ from unpublished texts in Yale (NBC 5452 is *Sin-iddinam D*, see Brisch 2007: 265).

⁷³ Contextual translation. Differently Foxvog (1993: 104): ‘Goddess, who has favored the hero that he might make your powers surpass (even) An’s.’

⁷⁴ In the case of Nergal, the god of the underworld, such expressions might be compared to the ancient Greek practice of referring to Hades as a kind of Zeus: see e.g. Aesch. *Supp.* 231, Eur. fr. 912 Kannicht. See already West (1997: 373).

^den-lil₂-banda₃^{da}-me-en / an ki-a dili-ni diġir-ra-am₃ dub-us₂-a-ni za-e-me-en

You (Enki) are the junior Enlil. In heaven and earth (Enlil) alone is god, you (Enki) are second to him.

(*Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 14–15)

nam-tar-ra-zu ki-bi-še₃ ši-ġar ^den-lil₂-banda₃^{da}-me-e[n]

(Enki,) the fate you decide is indeed well founded, you are the junior Enlil.⁷⁵

(*Išme-Dagan D*, adab to Enki, B3)

[^den]-lil₂-banda₃^{da} du₁₁-ga zi-da

(Enki,) the junior Enlil, who makes true pronouncements.

(*Išme-Dagan E*, balbale to Enki, A14)

nam-^den-lil₂-banda₃^{da}-aš mu-ni-in-il₂-i

(Enki), whom (An) has elevated to junior-Enlilship.

(*Hymn to Enki*, 2)

nu-dim₂-mud ^den-lil₂-b[anda₃]

Nudimmud (= Enki), j[unior] Enlil [. . .].

(NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki, 5)

^dnergal e₂ da-ri₂ irigal₂^{gal} ^den-lil₂-banda₃^{da}-me-en

Nergal, (in) the eternal house, the underworld, you are a junior Enlil.

(*Šu-ilišu A*, adab to Nergal, 19)

^r^dnergal^ṛ en ^den-lil₂ kalam-m[a-na-me-en]

Nergal, lord, you are indeed the Enlil of (Enlil's) land.

(*Nergal C*, tigi, 39)

ki nin ki kal-kal na[m]-^den-lil₂ ša-ba-ak-e

In the place of the lady (Ereškigal), the precious place, you (Nergal) exert Enlilship.

(*Nergal B*, 32)

^dsuen dumu ki-aġ₂ ša₃-za-ra me ša¹-mu-ni-ba

nam-^den-lil₂ an ki mu-ne-šum₂

⁷⁵ Zgoll (1997: 417) entertains the connotation 'ungestüm', apparently another sense of 'banda₃' when applied to animals (see *PSD* s.v. ban₃-da D.4 and Sjöberg 1961: 60 ad 9).

To Suen, the son beloved of your (Enlil's) heart, you have apportioned
the powers,
you have given him Enlilship over heaven and earth.

(*Išme-Dagan F_A*, adab(?) to Enlil, 20'-1')

nam-tar-re a-ra₂ nam-^den-l[il- . . . saĝ]-e-eš ħu-mu-rig₇

(Enlil) has given (to Nanna) the capacity to determine fate in the way of
Enlilship.

(*Išme-Dagan M*, adab to Nanna, B4)

unken maḥ nam-^den-lil₂-la₂-na saĝ-e-eš mu-ra-an-rig₇

(Enlil) has bestowed his Enlilship of the great assembly upon you
(Nanna).

(*Nanna E*, 16)⁷⁶

Hence the hyperbolic praise of individual deities, which sometimes results in explicit affirmation of superiority over the others (especially in the case of Inana), is balanced by the fact that An and Enlil often remain the point of reference in such comparisons.

⁷⁶ A passage in the short Sumerian fable *Enlil and Namzitara* alludes to a mythological theft of 'nam-^den-lil₂', but the exact interpretation is uncertain: see Alster (2005b: 335) and more recently Cohen (2010).

Akkadian Hymns of the Old Babylonian Period

As original Sumerian hymns gradually ceased to be composed in the dynasties of Larsa and Babylon, Akkadian songs in praise of gods began to emerge. It is generally understood that these new hymns illustrate the continuity from Sumerian to Akkadian literature in the Old Babylonian period.¹ In the context of the present study, this continuity provides an opportunity to study the adaptation of ancient Near Eastern religious poetry from one language to another.

Akkadian hymns generally conserve Sumerian forms of praise: the *topoi* noted in the preceding chapter will be found again here. Yet the move from Sumerian to Akkadian is not simply a process of translation or even imitation. The small corpus of Old Babylonian Akkadian literature is generally appreciated for its ‘freshness’ and ‘originality’ (Lambert 1996: 123), for its ability to ‘spring some big surprises’ (George 2009: xv) on the modern critic. These remarks were made from the perspective of later Akkadian literature, but they remain true even as one approaches the Old Babylonian texts from a Sumerian point of view. A recent study of a related topic—on various types of prologues to narrative compositions—has established a paradigm of poetic ‘tradition and innovation’ between Sumerian and Akkadian: ‘The ancient types largely continue to exist, although they are variously expanded, recombined or . . . reshaped.’² It will be argued here

¹ See e.g. the remarks of Hecker (1989: 718).

² ‘Die alten Typen leben größenteils weiter, werden aber verschiedentlich erweitert, neu kombiniert oder . . . neu gestaltet’ (Streck 2002: 258–60). Reflecting on Sumerian versus Akkadian epic poetry, Hecker (1974: 187–96) has come to similar conclusions. For more recent work in this area see Groneberg (2001), Wasserman and Gabbay (2005), Shehata (2009: 307–36), Shehata (2010), and Sallaberger (2010).

that the same paradigm may be applied to the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns when compared to their Sumerian models.

OLD BABYLONIAN SUMERO-AKKADIAN BILINGUALS

Before turning to the new Akkadian compositions themselves, it is worth noting that a number of the Sumerian hymns discussed in the previous chapter display more or less extensive Akkadian glosses on some manuscripts:

mu pa₃-da (gl. *zi-kir šu-mi*), VS 24.42 7' (*Ur-Namma B*, tigi to Enlil, 34);
 ši-im-e-ne (gl. *i-ta-am-mu-¹u₂*), TCL 15.18 col. I 3' (*Išme-Dagan F_A*,
 adab(?) to Enlil, 3'). Other examples: CBS 8548 (P263347) obv. 12, rev.
 10' (*Nuska B*, sergida, 12, 65); CT 58.53 obv. 5, rev. 3', 9', 15' (*Inana C*
 199, 251, 257, 263); VS 17.38 *passim* (*Sin-iqišam A*, to Numušda); CT
 36.26–7 *passim* (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil); TCL 15.18 col. III 3'–IV *passim*
 (*Išme-Dagan G*, to Ninlil); AUWE 23.106 (small fragment of Sumerian
 hymn, perhaps to Martu, with extensive glosses).

Some small hymnic fragments contain fuller Akkadian translations. It is possible that such texts come from a didactic context, suggesting that some of the Sumerian texts that have been compiled in the previous chapter were not only sung but also studied. One possible example is VS 2.89, a small fragment from a hymn to Nunamnir (a name of Enlil). Wasserman (2003: 75 with n. 69) has transliterated the reverse(?) of the fragment, declaring it a 'beginner's text' mainly for orthographic reasons. The obverse(?) may in fact illustrate the point more clearly:

[]-x dili^{li}-zu¹(DU)-ni maḥ-me
 []-x ka-la-ka ḥe₂-me-en
 []x e-di-še-ka ši₂-ra-ta
 [x d]a-nu a-ta
 [. . .] you alone are great,
 [. . .] you are mighty.
 (VS 2.89 obv.? 7'–10')

It is conceivable that the scribe has gleaned phrases that are found, for example, in Sumerian 'adab'-songs to Enlil and translated them into

Akkadian.³ The orthography ('ka-la-ka', for 'kala-ga'; *a-ta* for *at-ta*)⁴ and the gloss on 'dili'^{li} are certainly unusual.

In the case of some bilingual fragments, a full Sumerian original is available. There exist Old Babylonian extracts (*TIM* 9.20–6; all from Šaduppûm, or Tell Harmal, today in the south-east of Baghdad) of *Inana C* that include a word-for-word 'prose' Akkadian translation of the Sumerian original.⁵ These extracts cover only selections of the composition (the opening lines; the long litany on: *za-a-kam // ku-um-ma*, 'such-and-such is yours'), which can be a mark of the didactic exercise, and show a preference for simplified syllabic spellings of the Sumerian text, which may point in the same direction. Intriguingly, a recently published Old Babylonian Akkadian hymn to Ištar (*Hymn to Ištar B*) features just such a litany of predications: 'such-and-such is yours (*ku-um-ma*), Ištar!' But despite the thematic and formal similarities between Sumerian *Inana C* and Akkadian *Hymn to Ištar B*, there are only few instances of direct imitation. Groneberg (1997: 10) therefore speaks of a loose connection ('Anlehnung') rather than a translation.

Extracts from *Nisaba A*, which featured in what is known as the Old Babylonian school curriculum, were also translated into Akkadian.⁶ While some fragments remain of uncertain interpretation,⁷ the Sumero-Akkadian bilinguals in general seem to be of limited importance to the beginnings of Akkadian poetry in the Old Babylonian period. The Akkadian hymns that are the subject of the following discussion probably had little to do with these prosaic translations of (didactic?) extracts from Sumerian originals.⁸

³ Compare: *dili-ni diğir maḥ*, '(Enlil,) the only great god' (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 5); *an ki niğen₂-na-bi dili-zu¹-ni maḥ-me-en*, 'In the entirety of heaven and earth you (Enlil) alone are great' (*Išme-Dagan H*, adab to Enlil, 9); *en-lil₂ sipa a₂ kala-ga*, 'Enlil, the strong shepherd' (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 19).

⁴ See *CAD* s.v. *atta*: the spelling *a-ta* is common only in Old Assyrian. There may have been some influence from (regular) *ši₂-ra-ta* in the preceding line.

⁵ Another bilingual extract of this hymn, possibly post-OB, has been published by Michalowski (1998).

⁶ *UET* 6.388+579+*UET* 8.92; *UET* 6.389; *UET* 6.580, 581. *Iddin-Dagan B*, a hymn of royal self-praise that was part of the same curriculum, was also translated into Akkadian (*UET* 6.84).

⁷ *ASJ* 12, 11 (bil. or extensively glossed frag. of a hymn to Utu); CBS 10986 (possibly part of *Bau A*); *UET* 6.578 (to Nanna/Suen).

⁸ Shehata (2009: 307) goes so far as to exclude them entirely from her study of OB Akkadian hymns. But the bilinguals do represent an important source of lexical information and will therefore be cited frequently.

THE NATURE OF THE TEXTS

The extant sources indicate that Sumerian ‘adab’- and ‘tigi’-songs gradually ceased to be composed under the kings of Larsa (second half of 20th–first half of 18th centuries BC). None survive from the dynasty of Hammurabi of Babylon (18th–17th centuries). Shehata (2009: 308) has noted that, in the Larsa period, unilingual Akkadian poetry starts to appear in the written record, including two hymns on behalf of kings: the *Hymn of Gungunum* and the *Hymn to Amurru*. The former is damaged to the extent that the name of the deity invoked is not preserved; yet von Soden (1977a: 277) was probably right to refer to this song of King Gungunum (1932–1906 BC) as the oldest Akkadian *Götterlied* of its kind.⁹ The *Hymn to Amurru* is better preserved, although here the name of the king is damaged. Collation (June 2010) confirms the suggestion of von Soden (1989: 78) that Rim-Sin of Larsa (1822–1763) is meant (read: ^dri-[im-^dEN].ZU, rev. 43).

Hammurabi of Babylon conquered Rim-Sin’s Larsa in 1763. Three hymns can be attributed to his dynasty: the *Hymn to Ağušaya A–B* (Hammurabi, 1792–1750), the *Hymn to Nanaya A* (Samsuiluna, 1749–1712), and the *Hymn to Ištar A* (Ammiditana, 1683–1647). The *Hymn to Marduk* was found in an archival context datable to the early years of Samsuiluna according to al-Rawi (1992: 79 n. 1), which may be taken as the time at which the hymn was composed, as Charpin (2001) has suggested.

Many Sumerian hymns considered in the previous chapter were written down on single-column tablets (‘imgida’) or on larger tablets on which several compositions were compiled (*Sammeltafeln*). With some exceptions, usually only a very small number of manuscripts of each text survive. Likewise in the Akkadian corpus, most hymns are found on single-column tablets (*Hymn to Amurru*; *Hymn of Gungunum*; *Hymn to Ištar A*; *Hymn to Marduk*; *Hymn to Nanaya A*; *Hymn to Nanaya B*;¹⁰ *Hymn to Ningišzida*) or on *Sammeltafeln* (*Hymns to*

⁹ Wasserman (2003: 209) suggests that the deity in question was Nanna, presumably because both of the extant Sumerian hymns *Gungunum A* and *B* are addressed to that god. A key word in the hymn is *muttādum* (from a Gt-stem of *nādum*, ‘to praise?’): []x x mu-ut-ta-^Γdi^Γ ta-na-at-ta-ka lu-uš-ta-aš-ni, ‘[] m., let me keep repeating your praise!’ (obv. 2, compare obv. 12 and rev. 29).

¹⁰ Thus Ludvig (2009: 251).

Mama A-B; Hymn to Papulegara A-C). A few are found on multi-column tablets that do not seem to be *Sammeltafeln* (*Hymn to Adad; Agušaya A-B; Hymn to Ištar B; Hymn to Ištar C*). The last of these is a fragment.¹¹ Not a single duplicate of any Old Babylonian Akkadian hymn has so far been discovered.

Most of the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns, as far as their endings are preserved, carry a subscript. In the first instance, there are those hymns that, as in Sumerian, bear a subscript that identifies the type directly: 'it is a such-and-such song.' The earliest subscript to an Akkadian hymn, in the *Hymn to Amurru*, is damaged and very hard to understand.¹² Likewise in the case of the *Hymn to Mama A*, the beginning of a subscript is broken off.¹³

The best-preserved and therefore the most important source of Old Babylonian hymnic subscripts is the *Sammeltafel* that contains the *Hymns to Papulegara A-C*. The subscript, preserved both at the beginning and at the end of the tablet (col. I 1-3 and VI 34'-37'), indicates that the first hymn is a 'pārum to Papulegara' (1 *pa-ru-um a-na* ^dpap-ul-e-ġar-ra), while the second and third are a 'song of praise to Papulegara' (2 *ser₃ ta-ni-it-tim a-na* ^dpap-ul-e-ġar-ra). This produces a total of three 'Papulegara-songs' (3 *ser₃* ^dpap-ul-e-ġar-ra). In other words, 'song' ('ser₃'), which probably stands for *zamārum*, is the overarching term, subdivided into one *pārum* and two 'songs of praise' (*ser₃ tanittim*).¹⁴ The former is apparently a type of song: like 'adab', 'tigi', or 'balbale' in Sumerian, the Akkadian *pārum* is a piece of native poetic terminology, while 'ser₃ tanittim', in contrast to *pārum*, is a descriptive category in the manner of

¹¹ UET 6.889-91 are also Akkadian fragments of multi-column tablets, possibly of hymnic content.

¹² x-x-am₃ i-na ga-ma-al šu-ba-tim i-na šu-mi-im ša ri-i-tim¹ la-at diġir-en-e (*Hymn to Amurru*, bottom edge). Collation (June 2010) does not support the reading 𒀵𒀭𒀭𒀭-am₃ proposed by Shehata (2009: 317 n. 1826): 'It is a *tiki* (for Sum. *tigi*). Even in the absence of a convincing restoration, I understand this subscript as a compressed reference to the pastoral setting in which the singer had situated Amurru in the hymn (by repeatedly referring to his crook, the steppe, the villages, the countryside, etc.). The subscript could also allude to the occasion of the hymn: in the same manner, perhaps, as *BLT* 1, the *Song of Bazi*, where the subscript indicates that the song was sung at the time of year when the herdsmen take their flocks to higher ground (see George in *BLT* ad loc.).

¹³ [... ^dbe₂-le-e]t-i₃-li₂ (*Hymn to Mama A*, col. III 6').

¹⁴ Following the interpretation of Streck and Wasserman (2008: 346 ad 1-3), likewise Shehata (2009: 311).

Sumerian labels such as ‘sernamursağa’, ‘song of heroism’, and so on.¹⁵

The basis of the distinction between *pārum* and ‘ser₃ tanittim’ is not clear, since the *pārum* is otherwise poorly attested.¹⁶ The second and third songs begin with the same word (*i-la-am*, ‘The god . . .’), whereas the first begins with *a-ša-re-ed*, ‘Foremost . . .’. If it is significant that the scribe drew a dividing-line after each individual verse of the *pārum* but arranged the third song in a more complex order of individual verses, couplets, and stanzas, then the distinction is perhaps formal. Further, the individual hymns display partially different orthography and grammar, the *pārum* being more archaic according to Streck and Wasserman (2008: 336), which suggests that the originals were drawn from separate sources.¹⁷ In any case, the inclusion of the *pārum* on this *Sammeltafel* suggests that it was not felt to be fundamentally different from the two ‘songs of praise’. To this one can compare those Sumerian *Sammeltafel*n on which scribes compiled hymns of various sub-categories (such as ‘adab’, ‘tigi’, ‘balbale’) to one particular deity.¹⁸

The term ‘song of praise’ emerges in other Old Babylonian hymns. At the end of *Agušaya B*, the singer requests eternal life for King Hammurabi:

šar-rum ša an-ni-a-am za-ma-ra-a[m]
i-da-at qu₂-ur-di-ki
ta-ni-it-ta-ki iš-mu-ni
ḥa-am-mu-ra-bi <ša>¹⁹ an-ni-a-am za-ma-[ra-am]
i-na pa-li-šu ta-ni-it-ki x x²⁰
in-ne₂-ep-šu
lu šu-ut-lu-um-šu ad-da-ar ba-la-ṭ[u₂]

¹⁵ See Shehata (2009: 262–83) on Sumerian song-categories formed with ‘ser₃’, ‘song’.

¹⁶ See Groneberg (2003: 59–60, 63), Shehata (2009: 312–15). Streck and Wasserman (2012: 185) have recently adopted the highly uncertain reading *pa-[r]u-u₂*, ‘*pārum*-songs(?)’, at *Hymn to Nanaya A*, 28a, but without plausible interpretation, and it is not taken into account here.

¹⁷ It may be relevant that *A*, the *pārum*, writes/pi/as BI while *C* writes it as PI in what is usually regarded as the southern manner, see Wasserman and Gabbay (2005: 72 n. 4), George (2009: 5). (Hymn *B* is largely missing.)

¹⁸ Such as CBS 11325+ (*BPOA* 9 pl. 60–1), see Ch. 1.

¹⁹ Restored and translated with Hecker (1989: 739), Scheil (1918: 180). Thus also Streck (2010: 570).

²⁰ «in-ne₂», anticipating the following line? Thus Groneberg (1981*b*: 133).

The king who has heard this song from me,²¹
 a symbol of your heroism,
 your praise:
 Hammurabi,
 in <whose> reign this song (as) your praise
 was composed—
 may eternal life be granted to him!

(*Agušaya B*, col. V 23–9)

Agušaya B, according to this passage, was conceived first of all as a ‘song, a symbol of heroism’. This is because, as will be discussed in the present chapter, *Agušaya A* and *B* are in some respects modelled on the Sumerian processional hymn *Iddin-Dagan A*, a ‘sernamursağa’ (‘song of heroism’). Further, the singer refers to *Agušaya A–B* as a song whose content is the ‘praise’ (*tanittum*) of the deity. It is not difficult to perceive the ‘ser₃ *tanittim*’ lurking behind this.²² *zamārum* and *tanittum* stand in similar proximity in the final stanza of the *Hymn to Ištar A* (rev. 53–6), and the *Hymn to Ištar B* may have had the title: [ser₃] *ta-na-ti iš₈-tar₂* (upper edge).²³

A further Akkadian term designating a hymn is ‘ser₃ *ku-um-mi*’, ‘Song of the sanctuary’ (*Hymn to Adad*, col. I 3), which resembles the structure of ‘ser₃ *tanittim*’. This text will be discussed in more detail later in the present chapter.

In terms of rubrics—the sub-categories that divide a composition into sections—*Agušaya A* and *B* are arranged in ‘kirugu’-sections with ‘gešgiğal’-antiphons. A single ‘gešgiğal’ occurs at the end of the *Hymn to Ištar A* (rev. 60) and *Hymn to Nanaya A* (rev. 57); in the latter the context is too heavily damaged to be intelligible, but in the former the ‘gešgiğal’ clearly contains the *preces*, as is often the case in a Sumerian ‘adab’. No subscript, however, labels the composition as a whole. To this one may compare a hymn to Haia from the dynasty of Larsa, *Rim-Sin B*, where the *preces* are likewise contained in the ‘gešgiğal’ at the end of the song and the expected subscript (‘adab’) is lacking.²⁴

²¹ Thus with Streck (2010: 570); differently Shehata (2010: 202–3).

²² Similarly Shehata (2009: 320): ‘In diesen Zeilen wird die gesamte Komposition über *zamārum* und *tanittum* als lobpreisendes Singstück(/-spiel?) ausgezeichnet’; she does not, however, make a connection to ‘ser₃ *tanittim*’.

²³ On the formation *tanittum/tanattum* from *nādum* see von Soden (1952: 177).

²⁴ See Brisch (2007: 58–61); admittedly the ‘gešgiğal’ is preceded by an ‘uru’-rubric in *Rim-Sin B*.

In sum, Sumerian terminology is employed in the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns only as far as rubrics ('kirugu', 'ġešġiġal') are concerned. A search for native Akkadian terminology yields only the *pārum*. The term 'ser₃/zamār tanittim/tanattim', 'song of praise', is more widely used. It may have been coined for the new Akkadian hymns in analogy to the Sumerian 'ser₃'-compounds.

STYLE

While the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns are indebted to Sumerian models in many ways, they are also composed in a particular, archaizing style of Akkadian known as the 'hymnisch-epischer Dialekt'.²⁵ This may be illustrated by an example taken from the *elatio* of a hymn to the goddess Nanaya by King Samsuiluna of Babylon:

i-ku-ul-la-tu i-la-tim ʾraʾ-bu-um ʾaʾ-nu²⁶-um
a-li-du-uš u₂-ul-li [r]e-e-šu-uš

Among all of the goddesses, great Anu,
her father, has raised (Nanaya's) head.

(Hymn to Nanaya A, obv. 17–18)

ulli rēšuš, literally 'he raised her head', immediately brings to mind Sumerian 'saġ il₂', a phrase found already in Old Sumerian inscriptions. Its basic meaning is 'to raise one's head' (to the sky, or among other deities) in the sense of 'to be proud', and can be said of cities, temples, deities, and kings.²⁷ The causative use 'to raise (someone else's) head' is also attested, for instance, in the *elatio* of an 'adab' to the Moon-god Nanna:

saġ mi-ri-ni-il₂ en gal ʾen-lil₂-leʾ nun-ba mi-ni-in-ku₄-re-en

He (Enlil) has raised your (Nanna's) head, the great lord Enlil
has made you one of the princes.

(*Išme-Dagan M*, adab to Nanna, B5)

²⁵ The fundamental studies are von Soden (1931), von Soden (1933), and Groneberg (1972). See more recently e.g. Lambert (2013: 34–44), Kouwenberg (2010: 14), George (2009: 18), Streck and Wasserman (2008: 336–7), Krebernik (2003–4: 11), Metzler (2002: 21–3), Groneberg (1997: 7–9).

²⁶ -nu- apparently written over erasure (von Soden 1938: 39).

²⁷ See FAOS 6 s.v. sag—il, Rosengarten (1977: 42–4), *Gazetteer* nos. 967–9.

This is an exact parallel to *ulli rēšuš*, ‘he raised her head’, in the *elatio* of the Akkadian hymn to Nanaya.²⁸ But the form of *ulli rēšuš* is particular, as shown by a comparison with contemporary royal inscriptions, where ‘saġ il₂’ and its Akkadian translations are frequently found. For instance, King Hammurabi reports that Šamaš instructed him to build the wall of Sippar and ‘to raise its head’ (saġ-bi il₂-i-da // *re-ši-šu ul-la-a-am*, RIM E4.3.6.2 23 // 15).²⁹ While these inscriptional forms follow the usual paradigms of Old Babylonian Akkadian, *ulli rēšuš* exhibits three features of poetic style: (a) the pronominal suffix has been abbreviated to -š from -ša, as often happens at verse-end;³⁰ (b) the accusative of the construct state before this abbreviated suffix ends in -u (*rēšuš*), whereas the contemporary inscriptions of Hammurabi and Samsuiluna generally have -ī, the normal oblique case-vowel of the dual (*rēšišu*);³¹ and (c) word-order is free, in this case: verb–object rather than the usual order object–verb.³² So although a Sumerian model (‘saġ il₂’) lurks behind *ulli rēšuš*, the form that the expression takes here is fully integrated into Old Babylonian Akkadian poetic style.

STRUCTURE

The Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns lend themselves to the same tripartite division that was suggested in the previous chapter. The

²⁸ Also: ^dmarduk diġir saġ du₃-zu [g]u₂-en nun-e-ne-[k]a saġ-zu ħe₂-eb₂-il₂-l[e], ‘May Marduk, the god who created you, raise your (king Samsuiluna’s) head in the assembly of the princes!’ (*Samsuiluna B*, 24 = *TCL* 16.43).

²⁹ Further bilingual instances in this kind of context: RIM E4.3.6.12 13–14//16–17 (saġ-bi ħe₂-em-mi-il₂ // *re-ši-šu lu u₃-ul-li*) (Hammurabi); E4.3.7.3 12//15–16 (saġ-bi . . . il₂-i-de₃ // *re-ši-ša . . . ul-la-a-am*) and 90–1 // 108–9 (saġ nam para₁₀-ga-ni ša-mu-un-il₂-la // *mu-ul-li re-eš šar-ru-ti-šu*) (Samsuiluna); E4.3.7.5 62 // 58 (saġ-ne-ne . . . mi-ni-il₂ // *re-ši-šu-nu . . . u₂-ul-li*) and 81//78 (saġ il₂-la // *in re-ši-in e-li-a-tim*) (Samsuiluna); E4.3.7.7 13//11–12 ([saġ]-bi . . . il₂-i-da // *re-ši-šu . . . ul-la-a-am*) (Samsuiluna); compare also saġ il₅-la // *ša re-ša-ša i-li-a* (*Samsuiluna G*, 3, of the king). The form *re-ši-ZU/SU-nu* (RIM E4.3.6.2 44 Akk.) instead of expected *re-ši-šu-nu* (thus emended by Gelb 1948: 269) is unclear.

³⁰ See von Soden (1931: 177–80) with von Soden (1938: 39 ad 18).

³¹ See GAG §65j. Akk. *rēšum*, ‘head’, frequently occurs in the dual, in analogy to other body-parts.

³² See GAG §130b. Again this is in contrast to the parallels in the contemporary inscriptions.

invocatio illustrates the continuity between Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic composition. Consider the opening of the first of the three Akkadian hymns to Papulegara:

a-ša-re-ed bu-ku-ur ^den-lil₂ *da-na-an-ka i nu-za-am-me-e-er*

^dpap-ul-e-ġar-ra *ġi-ša-u₂ mu-ta-ar-ri-ir da-aš-ni*

Foremost, first-born of Enlil, your might let us sing:

Papulegara, the noble who lets tremble the mighty!

(Hymn to Papulegara A, col. I 4–7)

The formal similarities to the *invocatio* of the Sumerian hymns are evident: the genealogical reference ('first-born of Enlil'); the delayed name; the use of epithets to define a particular (in this case, warlike) aspect of the deity. The opening *a-ša-re-ed* is itself a Sumero-Akkadian pun on the name of the god, since Akkadian *ašarēdum*, 'foremost', was one possible translation of Sumerian 'pap'.³³ To begin the hymn with a general epithet such as *ašarēdum* recalls the frequent openings with 'en', 'lord', or 'ur-saġ', 'hero', in Sumerian, and the 'Let me sing'-topos *da-na-an-ka i nu-za-am-me-e-er*, 'Let us sing your might', looks like a calque on the familiar Sumerian abstract noun + precativ verb-phrase (of the type 'nam-X ser₃ ga-du₁₁/e').³⁴ Yet this is not a case of direct translation from a hypothetical Sumerian original. It is an imitation of the style of the Sumerian *invocatio* in general, rendered here in elegant Akkadian verse.

The opening of the second hymn to Papulegara on the tablet is not preserved, but the third can partly be restored from the colophon (col. VI 32'–33'):

i-la-am šu-pa-a-am [*u-ul-li sa₃-i-id*]

na-ki-ri-im ne₂-ir e²-ir]

^dpap-ul-e-ġar-ra *šu-p[a-a-am lu-ul-li]*

sa₃-i-id na-ki-ri-im [ne₂-e-ir]

Let me extol the resplendent god, who smites

the enemy, who sla[ys(?)],

let me extol Papulegara, the resplendent,

who smites the enemy, [who slays(?)]!

(Hymn to Papulegara C, col. IV 5'–8')

³³ OB Proto-Aa 81: 1–2: pap = *ra-bu-u₂*, *a-ša-re-du*, etc. (MSL 14, 92).

³⁴ There is OB evidence for 'ser₃ du₁₁' = *zamārum*: 'en₃-du-še₃ ab-be₂-ne' and 'ser₃-ra i₃-be₂-ne' are rendered literally as *a-na/i-na za-ma-ri-im i-za-am-mu-[ru]* in the enigmatic OB Sulgi-bilingual PBS 1/1.11 IV 81 and 90 // III 49 and 59, see now Goodnick Westenholz (2005: 344).

The elaborate *a-a'* structure (repetition of couplet, general epithet the first time, replaced by name of god the second time) follows a Sumerian model (see Chapter 1, with the example quoted from *Gudea A*, *tigi* to *Bau*). Given that ornamental repetition of various types is a universal feature of Sumerian poetry, attested already in the earliest Sumerian literary sources of the mid-3rd millennium,³⁵ Falkenstein and von Soden (1953: 41–2) rightly referred to this topos as an artistic device that was borrowed from Sumerian poetry. It was occasionally used in the Sumerian *invocatio*, and then widely deployed in the Akkadian hymns.³⁶ If my understanding of the Old Babylonian bilingual fragment *NFT* 212 (AO 4332) is correct, then the phrase *i-la-am šu-pa-a-am*, ‘resplendent god’, is probably also a Sumerian calque:

[diġir] pa e₃-a ġarza₂-zu ħuš-am₃ // *i-lum šu-pu-um ša pa-ar-šu₂-šu*
[]-šu

Resplendent [god,] your powers are fierce // Resplendent god whose powers are [].

(*NFT* 212 [AO 4332], col. I 1–3)³⁷

There is, on the other hand, no Sumerian equivalent to the verb of the ‘Let me sing’-topos, *lulli*, ‘let me extol’, which seems idiomatic to Akkadian.

In all of the Sumerian and Akkadian instances of the ‘Let me sing’-phrase cited so far, the singer announces his intention to sing, praise, spread the name of the deity, and so on. There are, however, a number of instances in the Old Babylonian Akkadian corpus where the subject of the ‘Let me sing’-phrase is not the singer:

ṛil^ṛ-ta-am zu-um-ra-a ra-šu-ub-ti i-la-tim
li-it-ta-i-id be-le-et ni-ši ra-bi-it i-gi-gi
iš₈-ṛtar₂^ṛ zu-um-ra ra-šu-ub-ti i-la-tim / li-it-ta-i-id
be-le-et i-ši-i ra-bi-it i-gi-gi

³⁵ See Wilcke (1975: 214).

³⁶ Other examples include: *Agušaya A*, col. I 1–8; *Hymn to Amurru*, obv. 1–2; *Hymn to Ištar A*, obv. 1–4; *Hymn to Mama B*, col. III 7–10’.

³⁷ This being ‘[wohl] die älteste Bilingue, in der ein primär sum[erischer] Text übersetzt ist’ (*RIA* s.v. Interlinearbilinguen §4). For ‘diġir pa e₃’ compare e.g.: *nir-ġal₂ ušum dili diġir pa e₃* (*Gungunum B*, to Nanna, B4), ^d*sul-pa-e₃ me gal-gal diġir pa e₃-a* (pun!) (*Sulpae’a A*, 5), *a-ba za-gen₇ diġir pa e₃* (*Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta, 36).

Sing (2nd pl.) of the goddess, awe-inspiring among the goddesses,
 let the mistress of the people, great among the Igigi, be praised!
 Sing (2nd pl.) of Ištar, awe-inspiring among the goddesses,
 let the mistress of the women, great among the Igigi, be praised!
 (Hymn to Ištar A, obv. 1–4)

il-ta-am ša-ma-aš ni-Γ ši 𐎶-i-Γ ša¹
^d*na-na-a su₂-up-pi₂-a šu-up-pa₂³⁸ na-az-Γ za¹-az-[za]*
ša-tu ki-ma ar-ḫi-im a-na-ṭa-li-im
i-ge-su₂ ši-il-la-ša ša-ru-ri ša-'-nu

[*uḫ*]-*ta-an-na-mu e-lu-uš-ša*
 [*na*]-*na-bu ma-aš-ra-ḫu du-šu-pu ku-uz₂-bu*
 [*ḫu-d*]*i ši-ḫa-tim u₃ ru-a-mi tu-uš-ta-az-na-[an]*
 []*x-ma-am³⁹ dna-na-a ta-az-mu-ur*

The goddess, the sun of her people,
 Nanaya, invoke (2nd pl.) her and manifest (2nd pl.) her appearance!
 She is like the moon to behold,
 dividing (?) her shade, replete with gleam (?).

She is richly endowed
 with fertility, health, sweet allure,
 she is equipped with delight, laughter, and charm,
 Nanaya (nom.) sang of [. . .].

(Hymn to Nanaya A, obv. 1–8)

a-at-la-li iš₈-tar₂ li-wa-at-ru na-ar-bi-ki
li-iš-mu-ma qe₂-er¹-bi-šu za-ma-ra-am

Sing joyfully, Ištar! Let them magnify your greatness,
 and let them hear the song inside (the cella)!

(Hymn to Ištar B, col. I 6–7)

³⁸ Read and translated with Groneberg (1981a: 180), see now CAD s.v. *šabābu* B. Compare *lu-še₂₀-e-Γ pi¹ na-ar-bi-ka na-an-za-az-zu*, '(Amurru,) let me manifest your greatness, (its) appearance!' (Hymn to Amurru, obv. 5).

³⁹ No convincing restoration has been proposed. The form of the verb and the context leave little choice but to assume that Nanaya is the subject of the verb, as all translators—von Soden (1938: 33), Seux (1976: 43), Groneberg (1981a: 180), Hecker (1989: 1974), Metzler (2002: 757), Foster (2005: 89), Streck and Wasserman (2012: 191 ad 8)—agree. In desperation, one could emend to *ša az-mu-ru¹*(UR), 'whom I am singing' (the *Koinzidenzfall*), as suggested by Metzler (2002: 757 n. 106).

In the first and second cases, the poet exhorts others to sing; similarly in the third case, other participants are clearly involved. In the second and third cases, moreover, the deity, who is female, is also in some way a participant. In the *Hymn to Nanaya A* she herself has sung, although tablet damage prevents a better understanding of the passage. I am not aware of Sumerian parallels to the imperative form of the 'Let me sing'-phrase, but in *Iddin-Dagan A*, 215–17, there was an indication that Inana, the subject of the hymn, had herself instructed the singer to compose her own praises (see Chapter 1). These two Old Babylonian Akkadian instances of Ištar and her cognate Nanaya being involved in their own hymn-singing may need to be seen in the same light. All of these passages suggest that the goddess somehow intervenes in singing her own praises; she is not a Muse-like source of poetic inspiration in general.⁴⁰

To review the Old Babylonian Akkadian *invocatio*, the frequent use of the repetitive *a-a*' structure in hymnic openings clearly imitates a common formal feature of Sumerian style. Sumerian models are evident also in other topoi, such as the genealogical reference, the opening on a general epithet, puns and calques on Sumerian words and expressions. We can be confident that these are signs of imitation, since the historical distribution of the datable sources indicates that the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns were intended to take over from the Sumerian genre when that language grew obsolete.

An instance of 'expansion' (in the terminology of Streck 2002: 260) may be perceived in the fact that 'Let me sing'-phrases are much more widely attested in Akkadian than in Sumerian. A greater variety of verbs (mainly: *zamārum*, 'to sing'; *nādum*, 'to praise'; *ullūm*, 'to extol'; *šutašnūm*, 'to keep repeating'; *šūpūm*, 'to make appear') are used in Akkadian than in Sumerian ('*me-teš₂ i-i*', 'to praise'; '*ser₃ du₁₁/e*', 'to sing'), and Akkadian employs the indicative (1st person) and especially the voluntative (1st sg.) and precative (3rd sg.) as well as the imperative, where Sumerian probably only employs the voluntative (1st sg./pl.).⁴¹

⁴⁰ See Ch. 5 for further discussion and comparison with early Greek sources.

⁴¹ Post-OB Akkadian instances of this form of incipit can be observed e.g. in the openings cited by the Middle Assyrian catalogue *KAR 158* (quoted at the beginning of Ch. 3), and later in *LKA 17* (to Gula, ed. Ebeling 1954b); *Oshima P 5* (to Marduk); *Livingstone no. 1* (to Aššur); *Livingstone no. 2* (to Marduk and Zarpanitu). See Oshima (2011: 33–7) on this feature and other formal continuities in OB and post-OB Akkadian hymnic poetry.

The central section of the hymn, for which I retain the term *laudes*, amplifies the praises. In a recent study of the use of tense in Old Babylonian Akkadian literature, Metzler (2002: 719–58) has provided a comprehensive stylistic analysis of the available material. According to him, Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns are characterized by their use of the present and stative tenses, and of nominal clauses. The aim of the singer is to describe the features of the deity and to imply that they are everlasting. Past tenses, on the other hand, are rare in hymns (which distinguishes them from epic), except in a few special circumstances.⁴² The first is the *elatio*, a conventional episode in which the deity is said to receive its attributes from one of the chief gods: this clearly follows Sumerian models (see the following section, and Chapter 1). But two Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns, *Agušaya A–B* and the *Hymn to Adad*, do contain extensive past-tense mythological tales that are reminiscent of epic narrative. This is important, because Classical scholars have sometimes noted (see Chapter 4) that ancient Near Eastern hymns are generally descriptive in style, in contrast to early Greek hymns, where narrative sequences are frequent. But these two Old Babylonian Akkadian compositions represent important exceptions to the general tendency, and they also seem innovative when compared to the Sumerian sources that were considered in the previous chapter. Hence a more detailed discussion of these extended narrative *laudes* in *Agušaya A–B* and the *Hymn to Adad* is called for.

Agušaya A–B is untypical among the Old Babylonian hymns in two formal respects: (a) the composition extends over more than one tablet, and (b) it is arranged in ‘kirugu’-stanzas, which so far occur only here in Akkadian. The first tablet (*Agušaya A*) contains six ‘kirugu’-stanzas, the first five of which are followed by a ‘*gešgiġal*’-antiphon, while the second tablet (*Agušaya B*) runs from the seventh to the tenth and final ‘kirugu’ (again followed by a ‘*gešgiġal*’-antiphon), the intermediate eighth and ninth ‘kirugu’-rubrics being lost to tablet damage. Since the preserved ‘kirugu’-stanzas are numbered continuously from one to ten (*A*: 1–6; *B*: 7–[...]-10), it is probably safe to assume with Groneberg (1997: 57, 71–2) that the two

⁴² Leaving aside rare isolated past-tense verbs, which can sometimes be interpreted as passing allusions to myths: see Metzler (2002: 317–18) on *Hymn to Marduk*, 7–13. The short *Hymn to Ningišzida* may contain similarly condensed allusions to the foundation of the god’s cult (rev. 22–4).

tablets should be read together, even if *B* is not necessarily the actual sequel tablet of *A*.

Agušaya A opens with two-couplet *invocatio* of the ‘Let me sing’-type, *lu-na-i-id šu-ur-bu-ta*, ‘Let me praise the very great one’, forming a self-contained sub-stanza of the first ‘kirugu’: it is marked off from what follows by a double horizontal line. From what remains of the first ‘kirugu’, it seems that the song continued with a description of Ištar’s warlike deeds; the corresponding ‘ġešgiğal’-antiphon consists of a ‘Let me sing’-formula. After the mostly lost second ‘kirugu’, the third section opens with a reference to Ištar’s celebrations (*i-si-in-ša*, col. III 7), including dances, at the start of the third ‘kirugu’. This is possibly a description of the occasion of the hymn, given that the end of *Agušaya B* suggests that the whole composition is an aetiology of a dancing-festival (see below). After two-dozen or so fragmentary lines, a typical *elatio* relates the gifts of an unnamed god, probably Ea,⁴³ to Ištar:

i-di-iš-ši eṭ-lu-ta-am
na-ar-bi-a-am da-na-na-am
bi-ir-qi₂ bi-ir-bi-ir-ri
u₂-ši₂-ib šu-a-ti uš-ta-as₂-ḫi-ir¹-ši
iš-ni¹ uš-ba-aš-ši e-ni-ši-i pu-lu-uḫ-ḫi-iš
u₂-ša-aš-ši-i-ši ma-li-im-mi
ra-šu-ub-ba-ta-am u₃ qu₂-ur-dam
 (Ea) has given to (Ištar) manliness,
 greatness, might.
 With lightning (and) gleam
 he has enveloped her in addition.
 Again he has added . . . her terror(?),⁴⁴
 he has made her wear a terrifying gleam,
 a frightening appearance and heroism.
 (*Agušaya A*, col. IV 3–9)

So far, the pattern followed by *Agušaya A* can be compared to the important Sumerian ‘kirugu’-hymn *Iddin-Dagan A*, which likewise opens with an *invocatio* to Inana with a ‘Let me sing’-phrase (first

⁴³ Thus Groneberg (1997: 39 ad 3); Hecker (1989: 733 ad 3a) suggests Anu.

⁴⁴ The interpretation of the verse is unclear. Streck (2010: 563–4) translates: ‘He added to her again her frightful appearance(?) among mankind.’

‘kirugu’), followed by her *elatio* at the hands of her father Enki⁴⁵ (second ‘kirugu’) and a description of the celebrations in her honour (third–sixth ‘kirugu’). Yet in *Agušaya A*, the singer does not at this point return to descriptive praises of Ištar or to the celebrations that are taking place. Instead the *elatio* leads into a past-tense story: *ši-i iḫ-su-us₂¹ qu₂-ur-da-am / i-li-bi-i-ša ik-ta-ša¹-ar a-na-an-ta*, ‘(Ištar) thought of heroism / in her heart she plotted a battle’ (*Agušaya A*, col. IV 10–11).

It is hardly a coincidence that the *qurđum*, the ‘heroic thing’ planned by Ištar, is identical to the last attribute that had been bestowed on her by Ea. *Agušaya A–B* are indeed marked by a general ‘hero’ (*qrd*)-theme. Already the *invocatio* had called upon Ištar as the ‘heroic one amongst the gods’ (*Agušaya A*, col. I 2 = 6); at the conclusion of the narrative she is referred to as ‘Agušaya, hero of the gods’ (*Agušaya B*, col. V 6); in the *preces*, the singer refers to the whole composition as ‘this song / a symbol of your heroism’ (*Agušaya B*, col. V 23–4), possibly in analogy to Sumerian ‘*sernamursāga*’, the subscript of *Iddin-Dagan A*.⁴⁶ In our passage, the concept of heroism forms the nexus between the conventional part of the *laudes* (*qurđum* being an attribute bestowed upon Ištar in the *elatio*) and the unconventional narrative section that follows (*qurđum* being the object of Ištar’s plot against Ea). The goddess then says to herself: *i-šu-ub-ti ni-iš-ši-i-ki^d e₂-a / pu-lu-uḫ-ta-am uš-re-e*,⁴⁷ “‘In the dwelling of prince Ea / maintain terror!’” (*Agušaya A*, col. IV 12–13). Again, ‘terror’, *puluḫtum*, was among the attributes Ištar had received from Ea. The *elatio* can therefore be said to be the starting-point of the past-tense narrative, which even includes the speech-introduction formula ‘X made to speak and said to Y’ that is so typical of epic poetry,⁴⁸ on which the hymn now embarks.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ The *elatio* of Inana in *Iddin-Dagan A*, in which she receives the ‘me’ from Enki, may allude to the myth *Inana and Enki*, in which she steals the divine powers from him, see Römer (1965: 153).

⁴⁶ This shared ‘hero’-theme was noted already by Groneberg (1997: 61). *qurđum* is also an attribute of Ištar at the opening of *Hymn to Ištar B*, col. I.

⁴⁷ Imperative (2nd sg. fem.) of *našārum*, see Hecker (1989: 734 ad 13a).

⁴⁸ *Agušaya A*, col. VI 14–16; *Agušaya B*, col. V 5–6. Sonnek (1940: 226–8) has compiled the attestations of this expression and its variants (updated by Hecker 1974: 174–7).

⁴⁹ Here I disagree with the analysis of Hecker (1974: 93), according to which the narrative is already ‘in vollem Gange’ at the elevation of Ištar by Ea. According to the argument advanced in Chs. 1 and 2, this type of elevation (*elatio*) is a stereotypical

Ištar has such a terrifying effect on Ea that he eventually grows angry (*i-gu-ug*, col. IV 21). The fourth, again imperfectly preserved, ‘kirugu’ tells of Ea’s reaction. At the urging of the other gods, he creates a rival deity—Šaltum, ‘Strife’—who is to challenge unruly Ištar. In this context, Hecker (1974: 95 n. 1) has drawn attention to an important parallel in the Old Babylonian epic of *Atrahasis*. There, the gods initially request the mother goddess Nintu to create man. She replies that Enki is responsible for ‘making things’. The gods then turn to Enki so that Nintu may create man according to his instructions. In *Agušaya A*, the gods turn to Ea in the same way—compare:

it-ti-ia-ma la na-tu₂ a-na e-pe₂-ši

it-ti ^den-ki-ma i-ba-aš-ši ši-ip-ru

(Nintu speaking:) ‘It is not possible for me to do (this),
the skill lies with Enki.’

(OB *Atrahasis* I, 200–1, ed. Lambert and Millard 1969)

ip-ta-aḥ-ru iš-ta-lu

la na-tu₂-šu-nu-ši

a-na ni-ši-i-ki ^de₂-a

u₂-te¹-er-ru si-iq-ra-am

iš-ti-i-ka lu na-tu₂

an-nu-u₂ e-pe₂-šu-um

(The gods) gathered (and) reflected:

it was not possible for them.

To prince Ea

they addressed the word:

‘It is possible for you

to do this!’

(*Agušaya A*, col. V 14’–19’)

Whether or not the poet of *Agušaya A* was familiar with the text of *Atrahasis*, as Groneberg (1997: 68) assumes, a common creation myth involving Enki/Ea and the resolution of the other gods clearly underlies both episodes. In *Agušaya A*, Ea proceeds to create Šaltum with his spit and the dirt from his nails. Oppenheim (1950: 133) and Groneberg (1997: 68–9) have compared an episode in the Sumerian

element of OB Sumerian and Akkadian hymns, from which the remarkable mythological tale of *Agušaya A–B* emerges. Hence I would distinguish between the conventional *elatio* and the unusual narrative tale into which it leads in this particular instance.

narrative poem *Inana's Descent to the Netherworld*, 222–3, in which Enki creates from the dirt of his fingernails two helpers to rescue his daughter Inana, who is caught in the underworld. So while the particular creation-story of Šaltum that lies at the heart of *Agušaya A–B* is not yet attested elsewhere, certain details connect it to other, independent Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian narrative poems involving Enki/Ea as creator.

The fifth ‘kirugu’ begins with a lengthy description of terrifying Šaltum. Then Ea instructs Šaltum to confront Ištar. The essential attributes bestowed by Ea upon Šaltum are in fact those of Ištar—compare:

[q]u₂-ur₂-da-am du-un-na-am
i-na ne-me-qi₂ u₂-ši₂-ib
la-ni-iš-ki

‘Heroism (and) might
I (Ea), have wisely added
to your (Šaltum’s) form.’

(*Agušaya A*, col. VI 31’–3’)

with the gifts of *qurđum*, ‘heroism’, and *danānum*, ‘might’, bestowed upon Ištar in her own *elatio*.⁵⁰

The resolution of the story, the confrontation of Ištar and Šaltum, is preserved only in part.⁵¹ The extant part of *Agušaya B* continues the praises of Ištar (col. I–III). After what must have been a very substantial amount of text, the reverse of *B* sees Ea addressing the doubtless triumphant ‘*Agušaya*, hero of the gods’ (*a-gu-ša-ia qa₂-ra-ad i-li*, col. V 6). This new name of Ištar probably alludes to her ‘dancing’ (*gâšum*) mentioned at the beginning of the poem (*Agušaya A*, col. II 1).⁵² Ea then tells Ištar that there should be an annual celebration in the streets (*Agušaya B*, col. V 19–22) and formulates the *preces* on behalf of King Hammurabi.

Hence the central narrative of *Agušaya A–B* presents the goddess as ‘heroic’ (*ur-sağ/qarādum*). This view of Ištar, and perhaps the composition of *Agušaya A–B* as a whole, was possibly modelled on

⁵⁰ Conversely, *šaltum*, ‘strife’, is an epithet of Ištar herself in *Hymn to Ištar B*, col. I 19.

⁵¹ Foster (1977: 80–4) has attempted a reconstruction, repeated in Foster (2005: 96–7).

⁵² Thus Foster (1977: 84), Groneberg (1997: 62).

the structure of (hymns like) *Iddin-Dagan A*. But the hymn also draws on Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian creation-stories about Enki/Ea, as reflected in passages of *Inana's Descent to the Netherworld* and *Atrahasis*. Yet it is important to remember that the story itself, the creation of Šaltum by Ea as a rival to Ištar, is as yet without direct parallel. I suggest that the motivation for this particular narrative in *Agušaya A–B* lies in that standard set-piece of Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic poetry, the *elatio*. Not content with glorifying Ištar in the conventional way, the poet has spun the central theme of the composition—*qurđum*, ‘heroism’, the last gift of Ea to Ištar—into a mythical tale, at the conclusion of which Ištar emerges as the ‘hero of the gods’. In fact, the narrative element is so extensive that modern critics disagree as to whether *Agušaya A–B* should be referred to as a hymn (Hecker 1974: 98; Shehata 2009: 319) or an epic composition (Wilcke 1977: 181–5; Metzler 2002: 729). The decisive argument, at least in the framework of the present study, is the concluding prayer on behalf of King Hammurabi, which is a characteristic feature of hymnic poetry.⁵³

The *Hymn to Adad* contains the other important Old Babylonian example of mythologically expanded *laudes*. This hymn shares two distinctive formal features with *Agušaya A–B*: (a) it is a long composition that extended over more than one tablet; and (b) the *preces* are spoken by one of the characters of the narrative.⁵⁴ But in this case only the final tablet is preserved. It begins:

ṛgaba[?]-ri⁵⁵ še₂₀-e-me ik-ri-bi lu-na-i-id
 al-ti⁵⁶ še₂₀-e-me ik-ri-bi lu-na-i-id
 ser₃ ku-um-mi a-na diškur

Copy of: Let me praise the one who hears prayers!

End of: Let me praise the one who hears prayers!

A song of the holy chamber for Adad.

(*Hymn to Adad*, col. I 1–3)

⁵³ In keeping with the aims and methods of the present study, this analysis of *Agušaya A–B* has concentrated on formal developments: for a recent overview of other important aspects of this highly complex poem, see Shehata (2009: 319–21).

⁵⁴ The second point was seen by Wilcke (1977: 183). Compare, in Sumerian, the end of *Nisaba A* (prayer spoken by Enki).

⁵⁵ Read with Schwemer (2001: 420). The improbable reading ṛin¹-hu, ‘sighing(-song)’, is not sufficiently supported by the arguments of Shehata (2009: 315–16) and was rejected again by Schwemer (2007b: 151 n. 78).

⁵⁶ ‘al-ti(= til₃)’ for ‘al-til’, see Wilcke (1977: 179–80 n. 50).

‘Let me praise the one who hears prayers’ was therefore the incipit of the composition. The same expression occurs again in the *preces* of Enlil on behalf of an unnamed king: *at-ta še₂₀-me-e-mi ik-ri-bi-i-šu*, “‘You (Adad), listen to his (i.e. the king’s) prayers!’” (*Hymn to Adad*, col. II 13). One can infer that the *Hymn to Adad* was a song of praise composed on behalf of a king in the conventional manner: *invocatio* (‘Let me praise the one who hears prayers’), *laudes* (in this case a mythological tale about Adad), *preces* (spoken by Enlil on behalf of the king). The rubric ‘*ser₃ ku-um-mi*’, which may be modelled on Sumerian ‘*ser₃*’-compounds like ‘*ser₃ tanittim/tanattim*’ (see the section on ‘The Nature of the Texts’ in the present chapter), is attested only here: *kummu* refers to the abode of the deity, which may have featured in the lost part of the composition.

The extant text begins in the divine assembly. The gods inform Enlil that the Storm-god Adad is misbehaving (*ma-ta-am la uš-ne₂-e-eš*, ‘he does not let the land live’, col. I 5) and urge Enlil to intervene. The typically epic ‘X made to speak and said’-formula (*pa-šu i-pu-ša-am-ma i-pu-u_h-ri ka-la i-li iz-za-ak-ka₃-ar*, col. I 7) introduces Enlil’s speech. His reaction is to summon Adad’s sister, Belet-ili. Following Enlil’s instruction to Belet-ili to go out to appease Adad (col. I 12–13), the text of the first column breaks off. The second column resumes with Adad in the presence of Enlil. Enlil flatters Adad (col. II 1–8).⁵⁷ All life, Enlil says, depends on Adad, and Enlil had entrusted him with the rulers and the people; and yet Adad is devastating the land. Enlil urges him to listen to the prayers of the king, who is not named, to let there be rain and abundance in the land, and to submit all enemies to the king (col. II 9–19). The rest of the second column is missing, but since the reverse of the tablet is uninscribed, this will have been the final episode of the composition.

According to the interpretation of Schwemer (2001: 421), Enlil feels threatened by the behaviour of Adad: *iš-ti-a-num ša-du-u₂ i-li wu-’u₅-ur*, “‘One single mountain of the gods is in charge!’” (col. I 8),

⁵⁷ The poet uses the intriguing expression *zi-ik-ri ta-ni-it-tim iz-za-ka₃-ar-šu*⁷, literally ‘he spoke words of praise to him’ (col. II 2), which probably imitates Sum. ‘*za₃-mi₂ du₁₁*’ (see ELS §939). Schwemer (2001: 421) aptly paraphrases Enlil’s ‘words of praise’ as a ‘schmeicheln^{de} Lobrede’: it seems that ‘*za₃-mi₂ du₁₁*’, and hence also its Akkadian calque, pun on Sum. ‘*za₃-mi₂*’ (*tanittum*), ‘praise’, and ‘*mi₂ du₁₁*’ (*kunnūm*), ‘to treat with affection, to flatter (literally: to say “mi”)’ (ELS §642). Such punning is already in evidence in the phrase: *za₃-mi₂ kur-gal-ke₄ mi₂ du₁₁-ga*, ‘(Ninlil), whom the Great Mountain (i.e. Enlil) flattered with praise’ (*Enlil A*, 166, after KU 25).

Enlil exclaims to the concerned assembly, presumably with reference to his Sumerian epithet ‘kur-gal’, ‘great mountain’.⁵⁸ The pattern is similar to that of *Agušaya A–B*: the protagonist (Ištar, Adad) behaves in a threatening, overweening manner; an assembly of the gods is called; one of the chief gods (Ea, Enlil) intervenes to restore order. In *Agušaya A–B*, the narrative—the plot of Ištar—emerged from the *elatio*. A similar argument may be made in the case of the *Hymn to Adad*. Enlil reproaches Adad in the assembly for the damage that he, on whom the life of all men depends, has inflicted on the lands (col. II 3–6). He adds:

uš-ta-at-li-im-ku-um be₂-li pa-ra-ak-ki

e-pi₂-a-tim a-na qa₂-ti-i-ka ap-qi₃-id

‘I had bestowed upon you the lords of the daises

I had entrusted the people to your hand.’

(*Hymn to Adad*, col. II 7–8)

These verses are probably retrospective, as Metzler (2002: 475–6) argues. They remind Adad that Enlil had already put him in charge of his land once before.⁵⁹ Yet it seems to have escaped notice so far that this is precisely what is stated in an *elatio* contained in an important Hittite hymn to the Storm-god:

na-aš-ta ut-ne-ia-aš iš-ta-an-za-na-aš ap-pa-an-na ki-iš-ri-it-ti da-iš

He (Enlil) has placed in your (Adad’s) hand (the power to) seize
the people of the land.

(Hittite *Hymn to Adad*, CTH 313 = KBo 3.21 col. II 4–5)

Since the Hittite hymn clearly imitates an Old or Middle Babylonian model,⁶⁰ it is reasonable to adduce the Hittite passage in this context. Further, the first verb used by Enlil in the quoted passage from the

⁵⁸ Enlil is referred to by this epithet in the OB Sumerian ‘eršema’-song of Iškur edited by Römer (2001: 159–71), line 13, as he bows his head in fear of the terrifying Iškur. In the ‘eršema’, Enlil then instructs Iškur to attack the enemies of Sumer. It is perhaps worth noting that the verb used to describe that instruction from Enlil to Iškur, ‘a₂ aĝ₂’, was commonly equated to Akk. *wārum* (e.g. Izi Bogh. A I 27, *MSL* 13 133), i.e. the same verb that Enlil uses to reassert his authority over Adad in our hymn: “‘One single mountain of the gods (= Enlil) is in charge (*wu”ur*)!’”.

⁵⁹ My translation therefore follows Metzler (2002: 475): ‘Ich hatte dir [...] übergeben’ and ‘hatte ich deiner Hand anvertraut’, rather than Schwemer (2001: 421): ‘Ich habe dir [...] übereignet’ and ‘habe ich deiner Hand anvertraut’.

⁶⁰ See Ch. 3.

Akkadian hymn (*šutlumum*, ‘to bestow’) happens to occur in the *elatio* of the recently published *Hymn to Mama A*:

a-nu-um še-rum u₂-ša-at-li-im-ši
ša-du-i er-še-ti-im na-ga-ab na-ra-ti
 Fierce Anu bestowed upon (Mama)
 the mountains of the land, the source of the rivers.
 (*Hymn to Mama A*, col. II 10'–12')

Enlil's reminder to Adad ('I had bestowed upon you the lords of the daises, I had entrusted the people to your hand') could thus be interpreted as a reference to an earlier *elatio*, similar perhaps to the one contained in the Hittite hymn to Adad. Since only the end of the text is available to us, this suggestion can of course not be proved. But it may be that, in analogy to the case of Ištar in *Agušaya A*, the *Hymn to Adad* had begun with a typical elevation of Adad by Enlil in which the Storm-god was entrusted with the care for the land. The mythological tale will then have told how Adad went on to abuse his powers and had to be recalled and reminded of his duties.

Again, a correct understanding of the formal conventions of Sumerian-Akkadian hymnic poetry, in particular of the *elatio*, could prove crucial to the interpretation of this unusual narrative expansion. If the proposed analysis is correct, the innovative narrative *laudes* in *Agušaya A–B* and the *Hymn to Adad* represent an evolution of the conventional *elatio*-episodes of Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymns.

The prayer on behalf of the king is perhaps the clearest illustration of formal continuity between Sumerian 'adab'- and 'tigi'-songs and the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns.⁶¹ The *preces* can take two forms, both of which are also found in Sumerian: a prayer for the long life of the king, or a statement (of thanks, perhaps) that the deity has already granted that gift. The former type is found in the *Hymn to Ištar A*, a hymn consisting of fourteen stanzas of four lines each plus a 'gešgiḡal' that contains the *preces*, as well as in *Agušaya B* and the *Hymn to Adad*. The latter type occurs in the *Hymn to Amurru* and the *Hymn to Nanaya A*, which also has fourteen stanzas of four lines each, perhaps including a 'gešgiḡal'.⁶² Since these *preces* seem to be

⁶¹ See already Hecker (1989: 718), Shehata (2009: 317–18).

⁶² The text is damaged: see Hecker (1989: 726 ad 57a), Streck and Wasserman (2012: 185–6).

entirely derivative of the Sumerian models that were discussed in Chapter 1, I cite only one Akkadian example of each type:

iš₈-tar₂ a-na am-mi-di-ta-na šar-ri ra-i-mi-i-ki
 ar-ka-am da-ri-a-am ba-la-ṭa-am šu-ur₂-ki
 <<li-ib-lu (erased)>> li-ib-lu-uṭ
 ḡeš-gi-ḡal₂-bi

Ištar, to Ammiditana, the king who loves you,
 give long, eternal life!
 May he live!
 Its 'ḡešgiḡal'.

(Hymn to Ištar A, rev. 57–60)

[da]-ṛri-a-am¹ ba-la-a-ṛṭa¹-am^d na-na-a ar-k[a-am]
 [ta-t]u-u₂-ra-am tu-ši-ib ta-aš-ru-uk-šu-[um]
 [a-n]a sa-am-su-i-lu-na na-ra-mi-i-ša
 ṛtu¹-ša-at-[li]-ṛim¹-šu-um ṛša-am¹-ša ki na-an-na-a-ri-im

An eternal, long life
 Nanaya has given to him in added abundance.
 To her beloved Samsuiluna
 she has granted the sun as a light.

(Hymn to Nanaya A, rev. 49–52)

In other hymns in which one might expect a prayer on behalf of a king, the end of the composition is heavily damaged (*Hymn of Gungunum*)⁶³ or missing altogether (*Hymns to Mama A–B*; *Hymn to Marduk*). The *Hymns to Papulegara A–B* are also damaged. A, at least, mentions an anonymous king (col. II 1–4), while C announces the construction of a temple in Kiš and concludes: 'Papulegara, the hunter: rejoice and exult!' (^dpap-ul-e-ḡar-ra ba-e-ru ḥu-du u₃ šu-li-il, col. VI 31').

The preceding discussion of Sumerian hymns (Chapter 1) broadly distinguished between hymns that contain some form of prayer on behalf of a king ('adab', 'tigi') and other hymns that conclude simply on a brief 'za₃-mi₂' salutation to the deity. Shehata (2009: 318) notes that apart from the 'ḡešgiḡal', of which there is only one certain

⁶³ For the last two lines, von Soden (1977a: 277) suggested: [ša-ar-ru-ut g]u-un-gu-nu-um [ut-te-l]e²-el₂-le e-li gi-ip-ši ḥa-am-ma-i da-an-na-at, which he translated as '[Das Königtum des] Gungunum [er]hebt sich über die Massen der Usurpatoren, es ist stark'.

attestation, the Akkadian hymns that conclude on *preces* on behalf of the king do not contain any of the other ‘adab’- or ‘tigi’-rubrics (‘sagida’, ‘sağara’, ‘uru’) that one might expect. What is even more surprising, in my opinion, is that no known Old Babylonian Akkadian hymn ends on a ‘za₃-mi₂’-doxology, which is very common in the Sumerian sources. To my knowledge, Akkadian versions of such parting salutations are attested only much later.⁶⁴

PRAISE

In Akkadian as in Sumerian, the gods are praised both for their importance in the pantheon and for their life-giving capacity to man. In the former respect, Ištar’s position is clearly dominant:

di-ku₅ e₂-kur-ra // *da-ia-an* e₂-kur, ‘(Utu,) judge of the Ekur’ (*Hymn to Utu*, rev. 2’); *i-ni-li qa₂-ra-at-ta*, ‘(Ištar), heroic one among the gods’ (*Agušaya A*, col. I 2 = 6); *le-i-it i-li ga-še-er-tum*, ‘(Ištar,) powerful among the gods, mighty one’ (*Agušaya B*, col. II 12’ = 16’); *ga-še⁷-er-ti i-gi-gi*, ‘(Nanaya,) mighty among the Igigi’ (*Hymn to Nanaya A*, obv. 26); *šar-ra-tu i-la-tim*, ‘(Ištar,) queen of the goddesses’ (*Agušaya B*, col. VI 12); *pu-uh-ri-iš-šu-un e-te-el qa₂-bu-u₂-ša šu-tu-ur₂*, ‘In their (divine) assembly (Ištar’s) pronouncement is eminent, surpassing’ (*Hymn to Ištar A*, rev. 33); *a-na u₂-ur-ša-na-at i-li* (. . .) [^dE]N.ZU *u₂-ul-da-an-ni*, ‘Suen bred me (Ištar,) to be the heroine of the gods’ (*Hymn to Ištar C*, obv. 12’–14’); *qu₂-ur-qu₂-ra-at* ^d*a-nun-na-ke₄*, ‘(Mama) the smith of the Anuna’ (*Hymn to Mama B*, col. III 22’); *il ku-ul-la-at i-gi-gi be₂-el kur-du-^ri⁷/ e-te-el e-nu-na-ki* ^dAMAR.UTU *lu-iz-mu-ur* ‘Of the god of all the Igigi, lord of the mountains / ruler of the Anuna, of Marduk let me sing!’ (*Hymn to Marduk*, obv. 1–2); *qar-du-um ta-a-lim e-nu-na-ki i-li aḥ-ḥi-i-x*⁶⁵, ‘Hero (Papulegara,) beloved brother of the Anuna, (your) divine brothers’ (*Hymn to Papulegara A*, col. I 8).

The Sumerian hymns are usually at pains to emphasize that the deity is in some way an assistant to An or Enlil. This topos is much less

⁶⁴ *ta-nit-ti* AN.ŠAR₂ *be-el en-meš qu-ra-du ṭab-bat*, ‘Praise of Assur, the lord of lords, the warrior, is sweet!’ (*ABRT* 1.32–4, ed. Livingstone 1989: 4–6), the final verse of a hymn of King Assurbanipal (668–627 BC).

⁶⁵ Expected *-ka* does not agree with the traces on the tablet according to Streck and Wasserman (2008: 346), who would read *-m[a]*.

attested in Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns, perhaps because of the predominance of Ištar in the extant sources:

im-ta-al-li-i²-ku ši-i u₃ ḥa-mu-uš, ‘(Ištar) A and her lord⁶⁶ (Anu) take counsel with each other’⁶⁷ (*Hymn to Ištar A*, rev. 36); *u₃-ša-ka-al a-na-am i-na ša-me₂-e / ^den-lil₂ i-na ni-pu-ru ^dutu¹ i-zi-pi₂-ri / i-na e-iu-ga-gal ^rd¹iškur u₂-ša-ka-al / i-na a-ia-ki-im u₂-ša-ka-al iš₈-tar₂*, ‘(Ningišzida) feeds Anu in the heavens, Enlil in Nippur, Šamaš in Sippar. In the Eugalgal he feeds Adad, in the Eanna Ištar he feeds’ (*Hymn to Ningišzida*, obv. 9–12).

As for the relevance of the deity to man, Akkadian hymns emphasize the same qualities, such as providence, justice, and benevolence, as their Sumerian antecedents:

aia saḡ gegge-ga // a-bi ša-a[l]-ma-<at> qa₂-<qa_{21-im}, ‘(Nanna,) father of the black-headed’ (*Hymn to Nanna*, 4); *iš₈-tar₂ ri-tu-uš-ša še₂-re-et / ni-ši u₂-ki-a-al*, ‘Ištar holds the lead rope of the people in her hand’ (*Agušaya A*, col. II 10–11); *re-e da-an-šu₂-tim*, ‘(Papulegara,) shepherd of the humble’ (*Hymn to Papulegara C*, col. IV 10’).

niḡ₂ zi niḡ₂ si-sa₂ ki ^raḡ₂-ḡa₂¹ // na-ra-am ki-it-tim u₃ mi-ša-ri-[im], ‘(Utu) who loves truth and righteousness’ (*Hymn to Utu*, rev. 5’); *a-bu i-ši-a₃-ru⁶⁸ lu-še₂₀-e-pi na-ar-bi-i-ka*, ‘Just father (Amurru,) let me manifest your greatness!’ (*Hymn to Amurru*, obv. 5).

diḡir arḥuš su₃ ša₃ gur-ru a-ra-zu-e ḡeš tuku // a-na i-lim re-me-ni-im ta-a-a-ri-im še-mi te-es₃-li-tim, ‘To the clement, merciful god (Nanna) who hears supplication’ (*Hymn to Nanna*, 6); *še₂₀-mi te-es₂-li-tim pa-ṭi-ir ar-ni-im*, ‘(Amurru) who hears supplication and absolves from sin’ (*Hymn to Amurru*, obv. 4); *še₂₀-e-me ik-ri-bi lu-na-i-id*, ‘Let me praise the one (= Adad) who hears prayers’ (*Hymn to Adad*, col. I 1); *mi-im-ma su₂-pi ša i-ša-si₂₀-a-ni-im / te-še₂₀-me-mi*, ‘“(Mama) hears / whatever prayer they address to her”’ (*Hymn to Mama A*, col. II 4’–5’).

The deity provides life and prosperity, again as in Sumerian:

en gal lu₂ ti-ti ki aḡ₂-me-en // be-lum ra-bu-u₂ ša a-wi-lam bu-lu-ṭu₂ i-ra-mu, ‘(Sum.: You are the) great lord (Nanna) who likes to let man live’ (*Hymn to Nanna*, 4); *ša na-ap-ša-at ka-la ni-ši iš-ti-i-ka*, ‘(Adad) on

⁶⁶ Edzard (2004: 513) translates *ḥammum* as ‘Eheherr’—‘bedeutet nicht “Gatte”, sondern “Familienoberhaupt”’ (von Soden 1977b: 280).

⁶⁷ Compare: *an-^rda ki¹ maḥ-a-na ša₃ mu-un-di-ib-kuš₂-u₃*, ‘(Inana) takes counsel with An at his great place (i.e. seat)’ (*Iddin-Dagan A*, 130, after SRT 1).

⁶⁸ *i-ši-a₃-ru* for *išaru* is unexpected, perhaps influenced by the spelling of *lu-še₂₀-e-pi*.

whom the life of all people depends' (*Hymn to Adad*, col. II 4);⁶⁹ *ši-ma-at mi-im-ma-mi qa₂-ti-iš-ša ta-am-ḥa-at*, '(Ištar) holds the fate of everything in her hand' (*Hymn to Ištar A*, obv. 14); *il-ta-am ša-ma-aš ni-ṣi-ṣi-ṣi*, '(Nanaya,) the goddess, the sun of her people!'⁷⁰ (*Hymn to Nanaya A*, obv. 1); *ša-mu-u₂-um ša ri-i-tim mu-uš-ši₂-ba-at / we-el-di-im*, '(Papulegara,) rain of the pastures that increases the progeny' (*Hymn to Papulegara C*, col. V 13'-14'); *tu-ka-al ga-am-lam el-le-tam šu-mi-lu-uk-ka na-di-na-at ba-la-ṭi-im a-na ni-ši ṣi-ik-ru-ṣi-uk-ka*⁷¹, '(Amurru,) in your left hand you hold the sacred crook that gives life to the people at your command' (*Hymn to Amurru*, 7).

mu-šu-ši₂-it ḥe₂-ḡal₂-li el-šu-nu mu-šu-li-it-ta-aš-nu, '(Mama) who makes abundance come to them, who makes them give birth' (*Hymn to Mama B*, col. III 17' = 20'); *ḥe₂-ḡal₂-la-a-am šu-uz-ni-na-am ma-ti-šu*, '(Adad,) make abundance rain down (on) (the king's) land!' (*Hymn to Adad*, col. II 14).

The Sumerian hymns tend to include a little episode (which I had called the *elatio*) that relates how the deity was elevated to its exalted position by the chief gods. In Sumerian, the verbal predicates are in the perfective conjugation (*ḥamṭu*); in Akkadian, they are in the preterite, just as one would expect:

[... *id*]-*di-kum ša-me-e i-na qa₂-t[i-ka iš-kun]* // [...] x x ṣan ṣan ma-ra-an ṣum₂ an ṣu-ṣu-uš₂ mu-un-ḡar, 'An has given [...] to you (Nanna,) he has placed the sky in your hand' (*Hymn to Nanna*, 15); *i-di-iš-ši eṭ-lu-ta-am / na-ar-bi-a-am da-na-na-am / bi-ir-qi₂ bi-ir-bi-ir-ri / u₂-ši₂-ib šu-a-ti uš-ta-as₂-ḥi-ir¹-ši*, '(Ea) has given to (Ištar) manliness, greatness, might. With lightning (and) gleam he has enveloped her in addition' (*Agušaya A*, col. IV 3-6); *a-nu-um še-rum u₂-ša-at-li-im-ši /*

⁶⁹ Compare the opening praises of a bilingual letter addressed to King Zimri-Lim of Mari: *ṣiṣkur ur-saḡ gal diḡir-e-ne* (...) [z]i ṣum₂-mu [niḡ₂-nam] zi-ḡal₂ ṣiṣkur qar-ṣu¹ *ra-bu-u₂ i-na diḡir-meš* (...) *na-[di-in] ba-la-ṭi₃ a-na mi-ma ša-ki-in na-pi₂-iṣ-ti*, 'Iškur, great hero of the gods (...) who gives life to all that exists' (*FM* 3, 81 col. I 15 // II 15, ed. Charpin 1992).

⁷⁰ Compare two other openings of hymns to Nanaya: *bi-ir-bi-ri-it ka-la ni-ṣi* [...] '(Nanaya,) flickering gleam of all the people' (*Hymn to Nanaya B*, obv. 1); [n]in me' nun-na u₄-gen₇ dalla e₃, 'Lady of the princely divine powers, emerging brightly like the sun' (*Išbi-Erra C*, tigi to Nanaya, 1). On comparisons with the sun see e.g.: munus zi ṣu¹ *utū kalam-ma ṣiṣma me-teš₂ ga-i-ṣi* 'The true woman (Bau), Sun-god of the land, the protective goddess, let me praise' (*Bau A*, B1), further Sjöberg (1961: 68 ad 26).

⁷¹ A possible reading of the traces (collated June 2010). Forms of *zikrum* in the locative and with a pronominal suffix ('at your/his/her command') are not uncommon in OB literary style, see Groneberg (1978-9: 24 sub B I a).

ša-du-i er-še-ti-im na-ga-ab na-ra-ti, 'Fierce An has bestowed upon Mama / the mountains of the land,⁷² the source of the rivers' (*Hymn to Mama A*, col. II 10'-12'); i-ku-ul-la-tu i-la-tim 𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵 / a-li-du-uš u₂-ul-li [r]e-e-šu-uš / et-tum mu-uš-ta-ar-ḫa-a[t] u₃ ka-na-at / i-ši-im-ši na-aš-ma-ḫi 𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵𐎠𐎵 ul-ša-am, 'Among all the goddesses, great An / her father, has raised (Nanaya's) head / she alone is proud and honoured, / he has decreed to her abundance, pleasure, (and) rejoicing' (*Hymn to Nanaya A*, obv. 17-20).⁷⁴

In the domain of hyperbolic praise, too, there is little to say that has not already been noted in the Sumerian chapter. Relevance in heaven and earth, and possession of the divine powers, are universal attributes of every god:

diġir ^da-nun-na-ke₄-e-ne ud₅-saġ an ki-a // i-na i-li e-nu-na-ki a-ša-ri-id an u₃ ki, '(Utu,) foremost in heaven and earth among the Anunagods' (*Hymn to Utu*, rev. 7'); men an uraš-a // a-ge-e ša-me-e u₃ er-še-tim, '(Nanna,) crown of heaven and earth' (*Hymn to Nanna*, 3); [ma-a]l-ka-at ša-ma-mi a^{sic} qa₃-aq-qa₂-ri a-na-ku iš₈-tar₂, 'I, Ištar, am the queen of heaven and earth' (*Hymn to Ištar C*, obv. 8'); ra-bi-ta-am ša-ab-su-ut re-mi-im / qa₂-qa₂-ri-im u₃ ša-ma-i, '(Mama,) the great one, the midwife of the womb of earth and heaven!' (*Hymn to Mama B*, col. III 15'-16').

[e-ri-i]š nam-maḫ me an ki ur-ru-ur // [be-l]e-et na-ar-bi ša pa-ar-ši₂ ša-me-e u₃ er-še₂-tim ḫa-am-ma-at, 'Lady of greatness, (Inana,) who gathers the divine powers of heaven and earth' (*Inana C*, 3 after *TIM* 9.20); ga-aš-ru ši-i-ru šu-u₂-pu-u₂ pa-ar-šu₂-u₂-ša, '(Ištar's) divine powers are mighty, great, resplendent' (*Hymn to Ištar A*, 22 = 24); ta-am-ḫa-at ri-tu-uš-ša / ka-la-šu-nu pa-ar-ši₂, '(Ištar) holds all of the divine powers in her hand' (*Agušaya A*, col. II 7-8); ka-li ḫi-im-ma-at pa-ar-ši₂ im-ni-ta-šu u₂-ka-al, '(Marduk) holds the entire collection of divine powers in his right hand' (*Hymn to Marduk*, obv. 7).

Most hyperbolic epithets found in Akkadian correspond to those found in Sumerian (*šūtuqum* = 'za₃-dib', 'surpassing'; *watrum* = 'diri',

⁷² A pun on 'ninḫursaġa', 'Lady of the mountains' (the Sumerian name of the mother goddess), as noted by Krebernik (2003-4: 18).

⁷³ Differently CAD s.v. *našmaḫū* with coll. Groneberg: 'na-aš-ma-ḫi id-da-ša ulšam', 'he (Anu) decreed for her (Nanā) exuberance, happiness as her...'. von Soden (1938: 39) had interpreted *ka-da-ša* as a 'lautliche Spielform von ḫadāša', on OB *ḫ* > *k* see now Streck and Wasserman (2008: 351-2).

⁷⁴ The most famous OB Akkadian *elatio* occurs at the opening of the prologue to the Laws of Hammurabi, where Anu and Enlil are said to have decreed Enlilship to Marduk: see Sommerfeld (1982: 74-5).

‘superior’). Enlil and Ištar are dominant in expressions of uniqueness (Sum. dili):

kalam-e za₃-dib // i-na ma-tim šu-tu-uq, ‘(Nanna,) surpassing in the land’ (*Hymn to Nanna*, 13); an gal-da za ša₄¹ (text: za da DU¹) // it-ti a-nim ra-bi-im ši-it-<nu>-na-at, ‘(Inana) who equals An’ (*Inana C*, 3 after *TIM* 9.20); san-kal a-aḥ-ḥi-i-ka, ‘(Adad,) first among your brothers’ (*Hymn to Adad*, col. II 3); san-kal-la-at i-gi₄-gi₄, ‘(Mama,) first among the Igigi’ (*Hymn to Mama B*, col. III 21’); šu-tu-qa₂-at i-la-tim, ‘She (Ištar) is surpassing among the goddesses’⁷⁵ (*Agušaya A*, col. II 4); iš₈-tar₂-ma ga-aš-ra-at el ka-la / i-la-tim ši-i-ma, ‘Ištar, she is indeed mighty beyond all other goddesses!’ (*Agušaya A*, col. VII 14’-15’); a-ia-um na-ar-bi-a₃-aš i-ša-an-na-an ma-an-nu-um, ‘Who can equal (Ištar’s) greatness, who?’⁷⁶ (*Hymn to Ištar A*, obv. 21); i-na i-la-a-ti at-ra-at, ‘(Ištar) is superior among the goddesses’ (*Agušaya B*, col. II 22’); i-ni-li a-ta-ar na-az-za-zu-uš, ‘Among the gods (Ištar’s) position is superior’⁷⁷ (*Hymn to Ištar A*, obv. 25 = 27); šu-tu-ra-at ra-bi-iš, ‘(Ištar,) you are greatly surpassing’ (*to Ištar as Venus*, top edge 2’); []-x dili^{li}-zu¹(DU)-ni maḥ-me // []x e-di-še-ka ši₂-ra-ta, ‘You (Enlil) alone are great (VS 2.89 obv.? 7’-9’); iš-ti-a-num ša-du-u₂ i-li wu-’u₅-ur, “One single mountain of the gods (= Enlil) is in charge!” (*Hymn to Adad*, col. I 8); i-ba-aš-si iš-ta-ta qu₂-ra-du, ‘(Ištar) alone is a hero’ (*Agušaya A*, col. III 4); et-tum mu-uš-ta-ar-ḥa-a[t] u₃ ka-na-at, ‘(Nanaya) alone is proud and honoured’ (*Hymn to Nanaya A*, obv. 19).

In sum, the Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns closely follow the Sumerian models that they have replaced. This continuity is particularly evident in the concluding prayer, which, from the point of view of the worshippers, constitutes the objective of the hymn. For that reason, it may be suspected that the context of composition and performance also remained the same. The openings of the Akkadian hymns suggest a playful engagement with Sumerian models, which could include puns. Two compositions in particular, *Agušaya A* and the *Hymn to Adad*, develop another stereotypical formal element of hymnic composition, the *elatio*, into mythological tales, which

⁷⁵ Compare: [i]n-nin₉ za₃-dib ^da-nun-ke₄-ne, ‘Lady (Inana), surpassing among the Anuna’ (*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 1).

⁷⁶ Compare e.g.: diḡir nu-mu-e-da-sa₂, ‘No god equals you (Inana)’, refrain of *Inana D*; za-e nam-diḡir-zu a-ba e-d[a-sa₂], ‘(Inana,) who can [equal] your divinity?’ (*Inana C*, 256).

⁷⁷ Compare: ^da-nun-na diḡir gal-gal-e-ne a-gen₇ ba-e-ne-diri-ga, ‘How you (Inana) are superior to the Anuna, the great gods!’ (*Inana B*, 115).

contain phrases and scenes that are usually found in epic poetry. Hence the Akkadian evidence can be seen as an early example of the continuity and transformations that were possible in the composition of hymns. Such an evolutionary relationship between Sumerian and Akkadian literature in the Old Babylonian period may seem unsurprising. But the following discussion of the Hittite material will show that Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic poetry was not confined to its cultures of origin. Certain compositions were exported to other parts of the ancient Near East, beyond Mesopotamia, where remarkable adaptations took place.

The Hittite Evidence in the Light of Old Babylonian Sources

The direct evidence for the survival of Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic poetry in later periods of Mesopotamian literature is limited. A Sumerian processional hymn to Ninisina, *Ninisina C*, was exported from Nippur and Babylon to Assur, where it is preserved on two bilingual Middle Assyrian copies.¹ One Old Babylonian Sumerian ‘tigi’ (*Nintur A*) is even thought to have emerged from the Nineveh library of Assurbanipal.² Then there are literary catalogues, of which the two most important witnesses as far as Middle-period hymns are concerned are *TMH* NF 3.53 and *KAR* 158. The former looks late-Old or Middle Babylonian and lists the incipits of about eighty Sumerian compositions, among them about a dozen ‘tigi’-songs followed by twenty ‘adab’-songs (*TMH* NF 3.53 rev. 61 and 82).³ So far it has only been possible to match five ‘adab’-songs to compositions preserved in the Old Babylonian corpus,⁴ which is due at least in part to extensive tablet damage, especially in the ‘tigi’-section. Much better

¹ *KAR* 15=16, the OB exemplar is CBS 15132 (ed. Wagensonner 2008). See Freydank (1991: 94–7) on the dating of the two Middle Assyrian versions, which were mutually copied and checked by two brothers. Another bilingual hymn exported from Babylonia to Assur is *KAR* 97, addressed to Ninurta; the original will have been Kassite since it mentions Dur-Kurigalzu (rev. 10; see Falkenstein 1953b: 2–3).

² Edited by Wilcke (1975: 235–9), see also Hallo (2010: 55–6, 71–2, 244–9). The colophon of the Assyrian manuscript (K 2489+) indicates that the original was from Nippur. In copying his text, the scribe seems to have misheard the name of the deity, for he attributes the hymn to Ninurta instead of Nintur.

³ See Bernhardt and Kramer (1956–7: 391–3), Wilcke (1975: 263–4), Hallo (2010: 140).

⁴ Wilcke (1975: 266–91) lists the following attributions (siglum *JB*): *TMH* NF 3.53 rev. 62 = *Nanna H*, 1; rev. 67 = *Lipit-Eštar D*, adab to Ninurta, 1; rev. 70 = (?) *Šu-ilīšu A*, adab to Nergal, 1; rev. 75 = *Ninisina E*, 1; rev. 80 = *Ninlil A*, 1.

preserved is the Middle Assyrian catalogue from Assur KAR 158 (see now Hecker 2013: 54–63), which lists, among many other Sumerian and also Akkadian compositions, the incipits of twenty-three ‘Sumerian tigi-songs’ (*te-ge-e šu-me-ra*, col. III 9, 17, 29) and at least five ‘Sumerian adab-songs’ (*a-da-pa šu-me-ra*, KAR 158 col. III 38).⁵ Only five of the total can be matched to the attested hymns of the Old Babylonian corpus.⁶ This indicates that there were many more Old Babylonian ‘adab’- and ‘tigi’-songs than have so far been discovered and published, and that more of these survived at least in the Middle periods than the direct evidence would suggest.

The first column of KAR 158 also cites several Akkadian songs (*za-ma-ru*^{mes} *ak-ka-di-ta*, col. I 17–18, 25–6, 34–5) with incipits that suggest hymns or hymnic prologues, such as *bu-kur bi-in*^d *a-nim lu-uz-mur du-un-na-ka*, ‘Son, descendant of Anu, let me sing your might!’ (col. I 20) or *ta-ni-it qu-ra-di*^d *iškur lu-sa-kar*₃, ‘Let me keep saying the praise of Adad, the hero!’ (col. I 28). None of these Akkadian incipits can be attributed.⁷

Despite the continued existence of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns in the latter half of the 2nd millennium BC, actual examples—as opposed to entries in catalogues or later copies of Old Babylonian originals—must be sought elsewhere, the richest source being the Hittite capital Hattusa (Boğazköy). Hence the present chapter will consider the extant examples of hymnic poetry in Hittite in the light of the Old Babylonian material that has been presented in Chapters 1 and 2.

⁵ KAR 158 is conventionally dated to the time of Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076 BC) but reflects the Assyrian appropriation of Babylonian tablets of which Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207 BC) had boasted earlier (see Hallo 2010: 243–4).

⁶ Wilcke (1975: 266–91) lists the following attributions (siglum As): KAR 158 col. III 3 = *Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki, 1; col. III 4 = *Ibbi-Suen A*, tigi to Suen, 1; col. III 6 = *Nergal C*, 1; col. III 36 = *Ur-Ninurta E*, adab to An, 1. Add that KAR 158 col. III 34 = *Išme-Dagan D*, adab to Enki, A1, partly confirming the reading: maḥ-[d]i (/maḥ-di₂-ib) suspected by Sjöberg (1977a: 31 ad 1).

⁷ One entry of a different kind but in the same section (col. I 6) cites an extant Akkadian love-song on Ištar and her shepherd (Black 1983). As Shehata (2009: 318–19) observes, col. VIII 9–11 seem to suggest the existence of Akkadian ‘adab’-hymns. So far none are directly attested, but if the five incipits that follow the first ‘adab’-tally (col. III 40–5) are also of that kind—and there is no reason not to think so—then the fifth entry must indeed be the opening of a lost Akkadian ‘adab’: *pa-qi-id ma-ḥar*^d *a-nim diḡir*^d *a-nun-na-ki ra-bu-u*₂.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES

In adopting and adapting the cuneiform script from Babylonia, the Hittites imported certain branches of Sumerian and Akkadian literature; Hurrian mediation seems to have played a considerable role in this fairly untransparent process.⁸ Wilhelm (1994) has analysed in some detail the role of hymns in the transmission from Sumerian and Akkadian to Hurrian and Hittite, and my discussion generally follows his lead. In my own contribution I have endeavoured to link the Hittite material as closely as possible to the currently available Old Babylonian sources, particularly in the light of certain recent finds. More generally, I consider the Hittite translations and adaptations of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns to be a precious and perhaps even unique opportunity to study the transmission of religious poetry within the Near East. The following assessment, which is essentially based on Wilhelm (1994), has been given in a recent monograph on Hittite literature:

Larger compositions that may be referred to as hymns are attested only from the 15th century onwards and are entirely in the Akkadian tradition. Hymnic poetry did not develop into a distinct category in Hittite and Hurrian literature. Songs in praise of a deity in the Hittite language are mostly taken over from Sumero-Babylonian literature, be it as Hittite translations or as free compositions.⁹

Chronology is the first issue to arise from this. In general, the tablets recovered from Boğazköy are thought to span the 17th or 16th century until the early 12th century bc. Dating the tablets relevant to this discussion depends on palaeography and, if the text is in Hittite, on the presence or absence of certain diagnostic features of the language, a task that is complicated by the fact that older originals

⁸ See recently e.g. Klinger (2010), Sassmannshausen (2008), Archi (2007), Haas (2006: 10–12), Klinger (2005), Klinger (2001), Schwemer (1998: 50–2), West (1997: 101–6).

⁹ 'Umfangreichere Kompositionen, die als Hymnen bezeichnet werden können, sind erst ab dem 15. Jahrhundert belegt und stehen gänzlich in akkadischer Tradition. Die Hymnik hat sich in der hethitischen und hurritischen Literatur nicht als eine eigene Gattung entwickelt. Lobgesänge zur Verherrlichung einer Gottheit in hethitischer Sprache sind zumeist der sumerisch-babylonischen Literatur entnommen, sei es als hethitische Übersetzungen oder als freie Kompositionen' (Haas 2006: 245).

may have been copied on more recent tablets.¹⁰ This can occasion a confusing variety of opinions. The Hittite hymn to the Storm-god *CTH* 313 (= *KBo* 3.21) is considered to be a Hittite version of an Akkadian hymn to Adad. Klinger (2005: 107) has recently classed this text, or at least its hypothetical model, as Old Hittite—that is, as belonging to the older range of the chronology.¹¹ An even more recent Hittite grammar, however, refers to the same text as MH/NS, that is to say: in an intermediate part of the linguistic spectrum, but at the more recent end of the palaeographic spectrum (*HG* §4.82 n. 182). The catalogue *CTH* suggests a Middle Hittite date, while Kammenhuber (1990: 193) asserts that the hymn is ‘translated directly’ into the later stage of the language (‘direkt ins Jungheth. übersetzt’). Such conflicting assessments arise partly from differences in terminology and partly from the fact that the same text can contain both (relatively) older as well as (relatively) younger sign forms and grammatical features.¹² Chronology is not in fact essential to the assessment of Hittite hymns that is envisaged here, which will concentrate on identifying Old Babylonian Sumero-Akkadian parallels. It is generally accepted that most of the reception seems to have taken place in the Middle period, that is, after about 1450 BC; and it seems to be the case that there is as yet no unambiguously Old Hittite evidence to challenge this consensus.¹³

Who was involved in the process of transmission? Foreign scribes were present in Hattusa.¹⁴ The subscript of the hymn to the Storm-god *CTH* 313 suggests that it was written by a scribe who was competent in Babylonian. Now this hymn, to take up the example again, is generally thought to be a Hittite translation of a lost Akkadian model. Goetze (1948: 150) went so far as to venture a partial re-translation into Akkadian. Yet even such an apparently clear-cut case of direct translation from a Babylonian original by a trained scribe is not free from difficulties. For the fact that the hymn promotes the Storm-god to

¹⁰ See *HG* under ‘Abbreviations and Conventional Markings’ and Kloekhorst (2008: 3–4). The division between Old and Middle Script has recently become more fluid, see van den Hout (2009: 28–35), Kloekhorst (2010: 201–2 n. 8), Weeden (2011a: 42–52).

¹¹ Güterbock (1978: 128) referred to *CTH* 313 as ‘written in a language that I would call Old Hittite; the manuscript is later’. Elsewhere, Klinger (2013: 102) however appears to tend to a mid- to late-15th-century date.

¹² See e.g. Schwemer (2009: 3), van den Hout (2009: 24).

¹³ Haas (2006: 245), Wilhelm (1994: 74); compare Archi (1983: 21–2) on *CTH* 313.

¹⁴ See Weeden (2011b), Haas (2007), Beckman (1983: 108), Falkenstein (1939: 8–11).

‘Enlilship’—that is to say: to supremacy in the pantheon—prompted one expert to remark: ‘But this notion is not Babylonian; this is not an otherwise known trait of Adad [the Babylonian Storm-god]. Therefore this hymnic text must be considered a product of Hittite (or, at the most, Hurrian) scholarship, despite its subscript.’¹⁵ Other interpretations have been advanced, but the basic point is nevertheless worth considering. It agrees with a general observation: the corpus of Hittite hymns, which comprises translations as well as Hittite (re-) compositions, suggests that their authors have carefully selected the Sumerian and Akkadian models that they wished to translate and adapt. They did not translate hymns to strictly Mesopotamian gods such as, for example, Bau, Enlil, Nisaba, or Ninurta, although plenty of models will have been available. Instead the Hittites were interested in hymns to those Babylonian gods who also happened to possess prominent, indeed pre-eminent, counterparts in their own pantheon: namely the Sun-god(ess), the Storm-god, and Ištar.¹⁶ This suggests that the translation of Sumero-Akkadian models was not a mere exercise in philology, but also reflected particular interests of the Hittites in certain aspects of Mesopotamian religion. These aspects include the praises of certain deities (Sun-god, Storm-god), the hymnic topos of *elatio* (elevation of a favourite deity by one of the chief gods), the rhetoric of ‘calming the heart’ of an angry deity in prayers, and also perhaps the use of hymns as prologues to narrative compositions. We will observe at least one case where a passage from an originally Sumerian hymn to the Sun ended up in a prayer of a Hittite king to the Anatolian Sun-goddess; in a prayer, paradoxically, that emphasizes her exclusive worship in Anatolia. So it seems that the texts that form the subject of the present chapter were not entirely without impact on practical religion among the Hittites. It would be

¹⁵ ‘Diese Vorstellung ist aber nicht babylonisch; von Adad ist dieser Zug sonst nicht bekannt. Danach muss man diesen hymnischen Text trotz der Unterschrift für ein Produkt hethitischer (oder allenfalls churritischer) Gelehrsamkeit halten’ (Güterbock 1946: 109).

¹⁶ This point, which in my view deserves greater emphasis than it has received in the past, was already made by Wilhelm (1994: 68). Beckman (2003: 43–9) has described a perhaps comparable process of adaptation in the Hittite version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which accommodates a number of characteristically Hittite priorities. Sumero-Akkadian Inana/Ištar reached Anatolia through early 2nd-millennium Hurrian mediation; she was known, among other names, by the Hurrian name Šawuška; see Wegner (1981: 11–12), Haas (1994: 345–50).

important to attempt a comparison between these hymns and other kinds of religious song that are attested at Hattusa. Schulz (2004) has recently surveyed the *Kultmusik* that featured in many important Hittite festivals and rituals, and some instructions for rituals do cite stereotyped invocations of deities.¹⁷ But much more basic editorial work needs to be done on such chants, which are frequently in Hattic, Hurrian, or Luwian, and for now they must remain outside the scope of the present chapter.¹⁸

The Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian corpora of Chapters 1 and 2 consisted mainly of free-standing hymns (of the typical tripartite structure: *invocatio, laudes, preces*) and of hymnic prologues to narrative compositions. Due to poor preservation of hymns like CTH 313 and 314, it is not certain that the former type is represented in the Hittite corpus; the latter, on the other hand, is well attested. The Hittites have also adapted hymnic language in order to compose prologues to certain royal prayers. This is particularly evident in the hymns to the Sun-god(dess) CTH 372–4 and CTH 376, where the element of personal prayer is so strong that it may be better to speak of ‘prayers with an extended hymnic prologue’ rather than of ‘hymns with extended *preces*’.

Laroche (1964–5) has surveyed the Hittite vocabulary of prayer and praise. The first source of information is the ‘Let me sing’-phrase found at the opening of hymnic prologues to narrative compositions. Hittite uses both the more general *išhamai-*, ‘to sing’, as well as the more particular *walla-*, which is conventionally translated as ‘to praise’.¹⁹ There is also important contextual evidence in the opening of a prayer by King Mursili to the god Telipinu (CTH 377), which will be discussed more fully towards the end of the present chapter:

¹⁷ Wilhelm (1994: 61) translates an extract from one Hattian-Hittite ritual (after KUB 8.41 col. II 10'–13'): ‘Wenn “der Sohn” (i.e. the crown-prince) den Wesir des Wettergottes beschwört, sprich[t] der Sänger: “Bei den Sterblichen (bist du) der Wesir des Wettergottes, [unter] den Göttern aber (bist) du der Wettergott des Feldes. Himmel und Erde [hältst du]” Dies aber ist entsprechend den Ritualen des Wettergottes geo[rdnet].’ See already Laroche (1964–5: 10–11, 27–8).

¹⁸ Though not a chant, one might also point out the resemblance between the invocation of the Sun-god in the ritual KUB 36.83 col. I 12–15 (CTH 434.2.A), see Bawanypeck (2005a: 266–7, 300), and the opening of the literary hymn to the Sun-god CTH 374 (discussed later in the present chapter).

¹⁹ Perhaps in analogy to Sumerian ‘ka-tar si.l’, see Metcalf (2011: 175 n. 28).

The scribe reads out [this] tablet daily to the god and praises (*walla-*) the god:

‘Telipinu, you are a powerful, revered god. King Mursili, your servant, sent me, as well as the queen, your servant. They sent (me): “Go! Invoke (*mūgae-*) Telipinu, our lord, our personal god!”

‘Whether, revered Telepinu, you are above in heaven among the gods or in the sea, or whether you are gone to the mountains to roam or to do battle in an enemy land,

‘Now let the pleasant fragrance (of) cedar and oil entice you! Come back to your temple!’

Further praises and a lengthy prayer for the long life of the king and prosperity in the land of Hatti ensue, and the colophon finally identifies the composition as an *arkuwar*, a ‘prayer’. So the limited evidence suggests that *walla-* was understood both as ‘to praise’ (preliminary to a prayer) and as ‘to sing the praises of’ in a song celebrating a deity, which comes closest to the modern usage of the term ‘hymn’.²⁰ What is striking is that there appears to be no native terminology (comparable, for example, to ‘*adab*’ in Sumerian or *pārum* in Akkadian) that denotes particular types of hymns. Perhaps this is because the Hittites were interested in hymns not so much as free-standing songs of praise but rather as prologues to solemn prayers or to narrative compositions. One might say that they were interested in ‘hymnic poetry’ rather than in ‘hymns’.

The fragmentary state of the Hittite sources makes it difficult to set out the material in thematic sections. Instead, a different arrangement suggests itself. The following discussion will move from texts that seem to be more or less direct translations to texts that are Hittite (re-)compositions on the basis of Babylonian models. A synthesis of the fragmentary and often difficult sources will be attempted at the end. In pointing out Sumerian and Akkadian parallels, I have placed the emphasis on Old Babylonian texts. But certain obstacles to comparison must also be mentioned, above all the use of the particularizing enclitic particle *-pat* in Hittite hymns. Many translate *-pat* in this context as ‘only’, for example, ‘only you (*zikpat*) are such-and-such, do such-and-such’.²¹ Singer (2002: 68 n. 3)

²⁰ None of the attestations of *walliyatar* collected by Kloekhorst (2008: 948; for ‘KUB 6.45 ii 48, 49’ read: KUB 6.45 iii 48, 49) warrants the translation ‘Preislied’ (HW, HHw; also Lebrun 1980: 442–3); ‘gloire, renom; vantardise, sujet d’orgueil’ (Laroche 1964–5: 28) is sufficient.

²¹ See HG §28.115–40, Hoffner (1973), CHD s.v. *-pat* 6d.

has recently expressed some reluctance, instead preferring ‘less-burdened’ renderings. While *-pat* is certainly restrictive, it does not seem to be quite as explicit as, say, Sumerian ‘dili’ or Greek *μόνος* in comparable contexts, and therefore I too avoid the translation ‘only’. It is a pity that the Hittite translation of the opening of the trilingual hymn to Iškur (*CTH* 314), where Sumerian ‘dili’ occurs (‘he alone is great’), is not available.

THE TEXTS

A few relevant texts from Boğazköy are preserved only in Sumerian and/or Akkadian, either because they seem not to have been translated or because the Hittite translation is lost.

CTH 792.1 is a fragment of an Akkadian hymn to Šamaš; a Hittite translation that seems to have taken up the second column is almost completely broken off. The Akkadian text is said to be a partial duplicate of a hymn to Šamaš found in Assur (*KAR* 19, see Ebeling 1954a, Seux 1976: 66), but in fact the similarity is limited to the title: *ina balu* ^dUTU *šar šamê u eršetim*, ‘without Šamaš, the king of heaven and earth (such-and-such would not happen)’, and to a few lines at the end of the preserved texts (see Seux 1976: 69 n. 35): see further Chapter 6. *CTH* 793 and 794 contain bilingual (Sumerian–Akkadian) versions of Babylonian incantations to Utu. *CTH* 801.3 is a fragment of what may be a Sumerian hymn to Nergal; a partial OB parallel is *CT* 58.46 obv. 1–4, see Viano (2012).

CTH 314, a trilingual (Sumerian–Akkadian–Hittite) hymn to the Storm-god, is currently distributed over five fragments, all found in Boğazköy. No corresponding text has yet been found in Babylonia. The hymn is considered to be an essentially Sumerian composition with secondary translations,²² and it indeed addresses itself to Iškur, as the Storm-god is known in Sumerian. Consider the first preserved passage of the hymn (only extant in Sumerian, the first column being in normal orthography, the second syllabic):

²² Schwemer (2001: 191), following Laroche (1964: 71).

[aia ^d iš]kur nir-ġal ₂	a-ia iš-kur ₃ nir-ġal ₂
[an ki]-a	an ki-a
[dili-ni m]aḥ šu-du ₇ ni ₂ <gal>-a-ni	dili-ni maḥ šu-du ₇
[x] abgal diġir-e-ne kala-ga	ni gal-a-ni nu-kal a-ni {erased}
	ri-ib-{erased}-ba ²³
lugal ^d iškur gu ₂ -gal kalam-ma	lu-gal iš-kur ₃ gu ₅ -gal ka ₃ -lam-ma
(fragmentary line)	

Father Iškur, lord of heaven and earth

Who alone is great, perfect in his dreadful gleam(?)

Expert of the gods, mighty one

King Iškur, canal-inspector of the land.

(Trilingual hymn to Iškur CTH 314 = KUB 4.6 obv. 1'-6')

In this otherwise unremarkable passage, the phrase 'dili-ni maḥ', 'who alone is great', stands out, for while this phrase is perfectly familiar to the Sumerian hymns, the attestations show that it belongs to Enlil and his circle (see Chapter 1). Here it is applied to the Storm-god, a striking hyperbolic statement for which there are, to my knowledge, as yet no parallels in Old Babylonian Sumerian or Akkadian sources. The other point that is worthy of note is the unusual syntax. Schwemer (2001: 192) translates 'šu-du₇ ni₂ <gal>-a-ni' as 'his gleam is perfect' ('vollkommen ist sein Schreckensglanz'), which implies a sudden change of subject: in the preceding and the following phrases the god is the subject.²⁴ Considering the sense of 'šu du₇' in Sumerian texts, 'šu-du₇ ni₂ <gal>-a-ni' seems more likely to mean 'he is perfect in his gleam': the normal Sumerian word-order has been inverted and the locative suffix dropped (one would expect: 'ni₂ gal-a-na šu-du₇', or 'ni₂ gal-a-ni šu-du₇' if one follows Schwemer's translation).²⁵

²³ The syllabic rendering suffers from a few misunderstandings on the part of the scribe, for the interpretation of which I follow Schwemer (2001: 192 n. 1318).

²⁴ Thus also Klingler (2010: 315).

²⁵ Compare e.g.: ku-si₂₂ za-gin₃-na šu du₇-a, 'Finished in gold and lapis-lazuli' (*Ninurta's Return to Nippur*, 149), and especially in combinations with 'nam-': nam-en-na šu-du₇ // *be-lu-tam šu-uk-lu-lu* ('Nanna,') perfect in lordship' (OB Akkadian *Hymn to Nanna*, 8); en nam-ur-saġ-ġa₂ šu du₇-a, 'Lord (Ninurta,') perfect in heroism' (*Šulgi T*, tigi(?) to Ninurta, 1); nin me gal-gal-la nam-nir-ra šu-du₇, 'The lady of the great powers (Inana), is perfect in nobility' (*Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana, 38). 'šu du₇' occurs in combination with 'ni₂' in Gudea's cylinder B: ni₂ me-lim₄-ma šu mi-ni-ib₂-du₇, '(The temple raised its head) perfect in gleam and splendour' (col. XVI 4), and in an inscription of Rim-Sin: "nergal en maḥ (...) ni₂ me-lam šu-du₇, '(For) Nergal, great lord (...) perfect in gleam and splendour' (*RIM* E4.2.14.5, 1-3).

en-na tu ₃ -uš-ga ₁₄ -ra	EN-aš li-li-wa-an-za da[m-me-da ku-iš(?)]
be-lu ša i-na ħe-gal-li	
giri ₁₇ -za-al iš-kur	me-ek-ki me-mi-iš-kat-t[a(?)]
aš-bu mu-te ₉ -el-lu ^d 10	
an-ta ħe-en ₆ -gal	nu ne-pi ₂ -ša-za i-i[a-da]
iš-tu ša-me-e	
me-ta-a-ši-im-ši-im	ħu-u-ma-an ħe ₂ -ia-u-wa-n[e ₂ -eš-ki-iz-zi]
ħe-gal-la u ₂ -ša-az-na<-an>	
(Sum./Akk.): Lord who dwells in abundance, (Akk. adds: noble) ²⁶ Iškur //	
(Hitt.): Swift ²⁷ lord who(?) promised much abundance(?) ²⁸	
(Sum.): Abundance rains down from heaven // (Akk.): He lets abundance rain down from heaven //	
(Hitt.): He lets all abundance rain down ²⁹ from heaven.	
(KUB 4.5+ col. II 11–14, KBo 12.72 obv. 11–14) ³⁰	

The provision of abundance and prosperity (ħe₂-gal₂, giri₁₇-zal) for the land is an aspect of divine power that Sumerian hymns regularly emphasize (see Chapter 1); and it is of course an aspect of the Storm-god Iškur-Adad in particular.³¹ The predications found here—‘an-ta ħe₂-gal₂ šeg₃’, ‘to rain abundance from the sky’; ‘(ki-)tuš giri₁₇-zal’, ‘seat of abundance’; ‘dur₂ ġar’, ‘to found one’s (cultic) seat’—are generic expressions said of various deities in Sumerian.³² Yet again natural word-order is violated: apart from the fact that *dur₂(KU) ġar-ra’ in the lost ‘orthographic’ Sumerian column has apparently

²⁶ As Laroche (1964: 77) notes ad loc., the Akkadian version translates ‘giri₁₇-zal’ twice: first as ‘abundance’ (*hengallum*), then as ‘noble’ (*muttellum*). In Sumerian texts, ‘giri₁₇-zal’ can have either sense (Sjöberg 1962). A slip of this kind suggests that the Sumerian version was indeed primary, and that the Akkadian translation was made independently. This passage might support the view of van Dongen (2012: 73–4) that the enigmatic deity ^dKA(=giri₁₇).ZAL in the *Song of the Beginning* (CTH 344) refers to the Storm-god.

²⁷ The Storm-god is not usually described in this way, according to the attestations in CHD s.v. *liliwant-*, but the originally Babylonian *Hymn to Adad* (CTH 313) does speak of his ‘swift net’ (*li-li-wa-an-za-ma-aš-ša-an ek-za-te-eš*, KBo 3.21 col. II 15–16). For a different interpretation see Klinger (2010: 321).

²⁸ Klinger (2010: 321 n. 44) explains the Hittite translation as a misunderstanding of Sum. ‘giri₁₇(KA)-zal’, ‘abundance’, where KA could be interpreted as ‘enim’, ‘word’ (or ‘du₁₁’, ‘to speak’). This may also underlie the lexical equation of ‘giri₁₇-zal’ with Hitt. *ud-da-na-la-aš*, ‘talker(?)’, in Erism. Boğ. A 126 (*MSL* 17, 108; Akk. *a-wa-ṛnum₂*¹).

²⁹ Transitive translation with *HW*² s.v. *ħe(ya)wanai-*.

³⁰ Restorations after Schwemer (2001: 193).

³¹ See Schwemer (2001: 65 and 195–6).

³² Compare: an-ta ħe₂-gal₂ im-da-šeg₃-šeg₃, ‘Abundance rains down from the sky’ (*Enlil* A, 147), also *Enki and the World Order*, 90; <ki²>-tuš ku₃ giri₁₇-zal-la ki-tuš niğ₂ lu-lu-a, ‘The holy seat of abundance, the seat of multiplying things’ (*Nintur* A, 36), further *Ur-Namma* A, 47 and *Gazetteer* s.v. *é.ki.tuš.giri₁₇.zal*; on ‘dur₂ ġar’ see the following note and Römer (1965: 153–4 and 262), Zólyomi (2000: 341) with examples.

been mis-analysed as ‘tuš(KU) ġar-a’ in the syllabic Sumerian column, the correct syntax is more likely to have been ‘*giri₁₇-zal-la dur₂ ġar-ra’ (not ‘dur₂ ġar-ra giri₁₇-zal’).³³ If the author of the Sumerian version was attempting a participial construction, he was perhaps influenced by Akkadian word-order. In that case, one might compare his ‘dur₂ ġar-a giri₁₇-zal’ (and perhaps also his ‘šu-du₇ ni₂ <gal>-a-ni’) to a phrase like ‘dib-ba niġ₂-nam-ma’, ‘who holds all things’, in a late Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn to Marduk from the time of Abie-šuḫ, which must reflect something like Akkadian *tāmiḫ mimma šumsu*.³⁴ So the Sumerian ‘original’ itself seems to be relatively late, even by Old Babylonian standards; and perhaps it appealed to Hittite tastes precisely because of its unusually hyperbolic praise of the Storm-god; or perhaps the hymn was itself composed in an environment that favoured him particularly.³⁵

CTH 313 is a Hittite hymn to the Storm-god preserved on a single manuscript from Boğazköy. The text ends on the interesting remark: [] DUB.SAR *pa-pi₂-li-li*, ‘[] scribe in Babylonian’ (KBo 3.21 col. IV 12’), and the hymn is indeed replete with the language of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and prayers. But the lost Old Babylonian model postulated e.g. by Haas (2007: 346) has not yet been found, and perhaps that is not surprising, as we shall see.

Most of the opening section of the hymn is lost. The well-preserved second column begins with an element of the *laudes* familiar from the Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymns: the *elatio*. In the preceding chapters I had defined the *elatio* as a brief past-tense interlude in which the deity receives its attributes from one of the chief gods (nearly always An or Enlil). Similarly in our hymn:

nu ^dEN.LIL₂-tar-še-et tu-uk pa-iš DINGIR.MEŠ-na-ša wa-li-iš-ḫi-u-wa-ar
 ṛma¹-ni-ia-aḫ-in-na tu-uk zi-in-ni-it
 na-aš-ta A-NA DINGIR.MEŠ GAL^{TIM} tu-li-ia an-ṛda¹ tu-el-pat₂

³³ Compare the opening line of *Sadarnuna A*: munus zi me gal-la dur₂ ġar-ra, ‘(Sadarnuna,) true woman dwelling in the great powers’, see further Sjöberg (1973a: 353 ad loc.).

³⁴ *Abi-Ešuḫ A*, 4 with van Dijk (1966: 69) ad loc.

³⁵ Klinger (2010: 323–4), based on an orthographic and palaeographic analysis of the extant fragments of this composition, suggests that the text was continuously reworked by various generations of experts in Hattusa. But it seems premature to conclude, as Klinger does, that the supposed academic interest in the hymn means that its religious content cannot have been of any interest to the Hittites—especially since Klinger nowhere engages with the content and its relation to OB sources.

gul-aš-[š]a tar-ra-nu-ut na-aš-ta ut-ne-ia-aš iš-ta-an-za-na-aš
ap-pa-an-na ki-iš-ri-it-ti da-iš

He (Enlil) has given you (Adad) his Enlilship, and he has perfected for you the glorification and the leadership of the gods. To the great gods in the assembly he has affirmed³⁶ your destiny, he has placed in your hand (the power to) seize the people of the land.³⁷

(Hymn to Adad, CTH 313 = KBo 3.21 col. II 1–5)

As noted in the introduction to the present chapter, the fact that the Storm-god is given Enlilship (^dEN.LIL₂-tar) prompted Güterbock (1946: 109) to suspect that, despite its subscript, the hymn is a product of Hittite (or Hurrian) scholarship. For in Babylonia, the god Marduk—not Adad—famously receives Enlilship (Akk. *enlilūtum*) at the opening of the prologue to the Codex Hammurabi (col. I 1–13). Rejecting Güterbock's interpretation, Archi (1983: 21) suggested that the hymn will simply have been composed in a Babylonian town other than Babylon (of which Marduk happens to be the patron). But the concept of Enlilship goes back not just to Akkadian *enlilūtum* but to Sumerian 'nam-^den-lil₂', which, as was shown in Chapter 1, is allotted by Enlil to gods such as Nergal, Enki, or Nanna-Suen at least as early as the time of King Išme-Dagan (*Išme-Dagan F_A*, adab to Enlil, 20'–21'). There is, to my knowledge, as yet no Sumerio-Akkadian instance of the Storm-god Iškur-Adad receiving the privilege of Enlilship, but this specific type of elevation by Enlil (and An) of a god of the second rank is an established topos. Just as in the case of the hyperbolic predication 'he alone is great' (*dili-ni maḥ*) in the *Trilingual hymn to Iškur* (CTH 314), the Storm-god finds himself conspicuously elevated; again it is not difficult to imagine that this will have appealed to Hittite religious tastes. The possibility that Babylonian religious literature was mediated via Hurrian was raised by Wilhelm (1991), and a transmission on that route would indeed provide an attractive explanation for the strong theological bias in favour of the Storm-god in the hymnic praises of Iškur and Adad; or rather, one might then say, of Teššob.³⁸

³⁶ See Kloekhorst (2008: 833 s.v. *tarra-*) on the uncertain interpretation of this verb; my translation follows the sense suggested by Güterbock (1957: 359).

³⁷ Compare *e-pi₂-a-tim a-na qa₂-ti-i-ka ap-qi₃-id*, 'I (Enlil) had entrusted the people to your (Adad's) hand' (OB Akkadian *Hymn to Adad* col. II 8), see Ch. 2.

³⁸ See also Archi (1982) on Boğazköy versions of Mesopotamian divinatory texts that seem to betray a Syro-Anatolian recension.

The following section describes Adad in two ways: first in his capacity as an interpreter of omens (*KBo* 3.21 col. II 6–11), then as a warrior under the command of An and Enlil (II 12–19). As Schwemer (2001: 221–6) explains, the former attribute of Adad is attested particularly in Ḫalab and Mari but never in Sumerian sources. It may therefore originate in the north Syrian or upper Mesopotamian area.³⁹ The warlike Adad with his net (*ek-za*, II 16), on the other hand, is reminiscent of a very old Sumerian theme: the god Ningirsu/Ninurta as the wielder of the battle-net, an archaic weapon, and the punisher of his father Enlil's enemies.⁴⁰ Being, according to one tradition, a son of Enlil, Adad acquires this warlike role in a stereotypical Old Babylonian myth that resembles the passage in our hymn, as Schwemer (2001: 166–7) shows.⁴¹

The remaining section of the second column describes the beginning of the storm; and when the text resumes in the third column, before breaking off, we find the hymn calling on the gods to appease Adad. As Archi (1983: 29) notes, the *a-a'* form of this prayer is borrowed ultimately from Sumerian style (see Chapter 1), while the rhetoric of 'calming the heart' clearly imitates the language of Babylonian prayers:

[*nu ki-ir-ti-it-ta*] *a mi-nu-wa-an-du li-iš-ši-ma-ad-du wa-ar-aš-nu-an-du*
 [*nu iš-ḫi-i*] *mi-nu-mar da-ra-an-du*

^dİškur-*aš ki-ir-ti-it-ta mi-nu-an-du li-iš-ši-ma-at-ta*
wa-ar-aš-nu-an-du nu iš-ḫi-i mi-nu-mar da-ra-an-du

Let them calm your heart, let them pacify your temper,⁴²
 let them speak placation to (you), lord!

³⁹ See also Schwemer (2007b: 149).

⁴⁰ See Haas (2006: 251) and Hoffner (1977: 105–6) on this passage and Steinkeller (1985: 40–1) on the net as a popular Babylonian martial motif. The phrase *li-li-wa-an-za-ma-aš-ša-an ek-za-te-eš* KUR-*e kat-ta ḫu-u-up-pa-an ḫar-zi* (II 15–16), 'Your (Adad's) swift net keeps the land thrown down' may be compared e.g. to *sa-par₃ maḥ an ki šu₂-a*, '(Enlil) the great net spread over heaven and earth' (*Šulgi G*, adab to Enlil, 7); compare also the net holding down evildoers to which Hammurabi likens himself in his self-praise (Sjöberg 1961: 51 line 6; further H 180+, hymn to Utu, 54'). The motif of the casting-net comes up in the Boğazköy copy of a Middle Babylonian Sumerian incantation, where it is deployed against a witch (*CTH* 800 = *KUB* 30.1 col. II 1, see Falkenstein 1939: 14 and Geller 1989: 197 line 43', whose translation should be revised in the light of Steinkeller 1985: 43–4).

⁴¹ See also Römer (2001: 157–71) on the OB Iškur-myth.

⁴² Literally: 'Let them calm you in (your) heart, let them pacify you in (your) temper', see Kloekhorst (2008: 470–1 and 803), *CHD* s.v. *leši-*, *lišši-*. For an OB instance of such expressions, which form part of the *Fürbitteltitanei* of the 'erša-ḫuḡa'-prayer, see *CT* 44.24 col. IV 13' with Maul (1988: 13, 22–4).

Adad, let them calm your heart, let them pacify your temper,
let them speak placation to (you), lord!

(KBo 3.21 col. III 10'–13')

This prayer is repeated in three stanzas requesting the Storm-god to take his seat in the cities of Sippar, Babylon, and Pada;⁴³ then the text breaks off.

The opening of CTH 312, an incantation to Ištar, is of interest because it translates many well-known Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic epithets. The longer version of the incantation is Neo-Babylonian (NB), paralleled by a Neo-Assyrian fragment (NA); Boğazköy has yielded an older and shorter Akkadian version (Bo) and a separate Hittite translation (Hi). The former is a *Sammeltafel*, the latter a single-column tablet; both are written in late Hittite script.⁴⁴ The opening line implores Ištar:

(NB) *u₂-sal-li-ki be-let be-le-e-ti i-lat i-la-a-ti*

(NA) []-a-⁷ti⁷

(Bo) *u₂-sa₃-al-li-ki GAŠAN-at be-le-e-ti i-la-a-at []*

(Hi) []⁷MUNUS.⁷LUGAL[]⁷DIN]GIR-LIM-iš

(NB/Bo) I implore you, lady of ladies, goddess of goddesses // (Hi) [. . .] queen [. . .]
god(dess).

(Incantation to Ištar, CTH 312 = STC II, 75 obv. 1 // Or NS 59, 487, K.17519 1' // KUB
37.36 col. II 5' // KUB 31.141 obv. 1)

This type of predication is known as the *paronomastischer Intensitätsgenitiv*.⁴⁵ In this particular form, there are least two partial Old Babylonian precedents for Inana/Ištar (nin gal nin-e-ne, 'Great lady

⁴³ The hymn names Adad's temple Enamhe in Babylon, first mentioned by Hammurabi (Schwemer 2001: 305); see Schwemer (2001: 308 and 321–2) on his temples in Pada and Sippar, both of which occur in the inscriptions of Samsuiluna.

⁴⁴ Where NB and Bo diverge, Hi tends to follow Bo in spite of a few discrepancies. See Reiner and Güterbock (1967: 263–5).

⁴⁵ Subjected to monographic treatment by Schäfer (1974). Apart from *Inana B*, 60 and *Agušaya A*, col. VI 27', the following OB examples can be added to his list of Mesopotamian attestations: ur-sağ ur-sağ-e-ne, '(Inana?) hero of heroes' (*Inana C*, 190, now restored from UET 6.571), ur-sağ ur-sağ-e-[ne]-me-en, 'I (Išme-Dagan) am the hero of heroes' (*Išme-Dagan A+V*, 249), also in the self-praise of Hammurabi (Sjöberg 1961: 51 line 11 // *qa₂-ra-ad qa₂-ra-a-di*, VS 24.41 obv. 2); ki-sikil 'nisaba nin gal nin-e-ne, 'Young woman Nisaba, great lady of ladies' (*Rim-Sin B*, to Haia, 32).

of the ladies', *Inana B*, 60; [*b*]e-le-et be-le-e-tim, 'Lady of ladies', *Hymn to Agušaya A*, col. VI 27');⁴⁶ the Hittite translation is unfortunately damaged, obscuring the exact rendering.

Since the Bo and Hi manuscripts date from the late Hittite period, the incantation is clearly rooted in the (mid-) 2nd millennium. The ensuing praises of Ištar are, in their hyperbolic style, indeed familiar from the many Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymns to Inana/Ištar (see the notes to the translation):

(NB) om.

(NA) om.

(Bo) *qa-ri-it-ti* [DINGIR.ME]Š ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ša

(Hi) DINGIR.MEŠ-aš-kan₂ ku-iš tar-ḥu-i-liš ŠEŠ.[MEŠ-ŠU]

(NB) *ḥa-mi-mat gi-mir par-ši a-pi-rat a-ge-e be-lu-ti*

(NA) [] *be-lu-ti* (then breaks off)

(Bo) *ḥa-me-ma-at ki-me-er par₂-si le-qa-a-at ru-bu-u-ti*

(Hi) [*x x ḥu-u-ma-a*]n-du-uš ku-iš da-a-aš šal-la-tar-ra-za da-a-[aš]

(NB) ^dGAŠAN šu-pu-u₂ nar-bu-ki UGU ka-la DINGIR.MEŠ ši-ru

(Bo) [^dGAŠA]N šu-pu-u ner-bu-ki eli(written: DINGIR-LIM) ka-la-a i-li at-ru

(Hi) [DINGIR.MEŠ(?) š]al-la-tar ku-e-da-ni kal-la-ra-an ŠUM₂-a[n-zi (?)]

(Bo) Heroic among the gods,⁴⁷ her brothers, // (Hi) Who is a hero among the gods, her brothers,

(NB) Gathering all the divine powers,⁴⁸ bearing the crown⁴⁹ of lordliness // (Bo) Gathering all the divine powers, assuming lordship //

(Hi) Who has taken all the [. . .] and assumed greatness,

⁴⁶ A Middle Babylonian instance is now found in the second line of the early duplicate of an Akkadian prayer to Ištar published by Wilcke apud Zgoll (2003: 108). For 'goddess of goddesses' see the same text, and the incantation STT 257 rev. 2 EN₂ *i-lat i-la-a-ti*, 'Incantation. (Ištar,) goddess of goddesses' (ed. Farber 2010, new copy in CMAWR 1, pls. 107–8).

⁴⁷ Compare: *i-ni-li qa₂-ra-at-ta*, '(Ištar), heroic among the gods' (*Agušaya A*, col. I 2 = 6). As was discussed in Ch. 2, the *qurđum*, 'heroism', of Ištar is the central theme of *Agušaya A–B* in imitation of *Iddin-Dagan A*, the 'sernamursāga' of Inana.

⁴⁸ Compare: *eriš nam-maḥ me an ki ur₄-ur₄* // [*be-l*]e-et na-ar-bi ša pa-ar-ši₂ ša-me-e u₃ er-še₂-tim ḥa-am-ma-at, 'Lady (Inana) of greatness, who gathers the divine powers of heaven and earth' (*Inana C*, 3 // TIM 9.20 obv. 8–9).

⁴⁹ For the phraseology, compare: *ap-ra-at a-ge-[e] na-mur-ri-a-tim*, '(Amurru,) bearing the brilliant crown' (OB Akkadian *Hymn to Amurru*, 6).

(NB) Lady, your greatness is manifest,⁵⁰ more lofty than all of the gods
 // (Bo) [Lady,] your greatness is manifest, superior over all of the gods⁵¹
 // (Hi) To whom [the gods(?)] give greatness (in) superior (measure).⁵²
 (CTH 312 = STC II, 75 obv. 7–8 // Or NS 59, 487, K.17519 7' // KUB
 37.36 col. II 10'–12' // KUB 31.141 obv. 6–8)

In a manner reminiscent of the *Relativstil* of Greek hymns (see Chapter 4), the Hittite version translates the participial and adjectival constructions of the Akkadian model into relative clauses (introduced by declensional forms of *kuiš*, 'who', lines 2–9).⁵³ Sumerian has no comparable construction; Akkadian does, but the Old Babylonian hymns use it very sparingly, preferring nominal clauses or simple main clauses with a present tense verbal predicate.⁵⁴ Some parallels may be found in the other translated Hittite hymns, but no case as striking as this.⁵⁵ The Hittite translation breaks off two lines after this passage.

The best and most important witness to the translation and adaptation of Sumero-Akkadian religious poetry is no doubt the set of

⁵⁰ Compare: nin-ġu₁₀ nam-maḥ-zu pa bi₂-a-e₃, 'My Lady (Inana,) your greatness is manifest' (*Inana C*, 270); šu-pu-u₂ na-ar-bu-ša, '(Ištar's) greatness is manifest' (*Agušaya A*, col. I 9).

⁵¹ Compare: u₃-du₂-da-ta nin banda₃^{da}-me-en/^da-nun-na diġir gal-gal-e-ne a-gen₇ ba-e-ne-diri-ga, '(Inana,) from birth you were the junior lady—oh, how you are (now) superior to the Anuna, the great gods!' (*Inana B*, 114–15). See also Zgoll (2003: 97) on this phrase.

⁵² Restorations according to Reiner and Güterbock (1967: 264 ad loc.), see there for the lexical equation *atru* = *kallar(atta)*- (now *MSL* 12, 214–15 11). The Hittite version agrees with the Akkadian version from Boğazköy, whereas NB *širu* is a later variant.

⁵³ As noted by Hecker (1974: 84 n. 1), West (2007: 308–9).

⁵⁴ 'Lange Reihen von nominalen Attributen und attribuerenden Relativsätzen finden sich vor allem in den jüngeren [sc. akkadischen Hymnen, i.e. in the 1st millennium]. In den älteren [sc. Hymnen, i.e. OB] überwiegen Aussagen in Hauptsätzen, in denen entweder der Gott Subjekt ist oder der Beter' (*RIA* s.v. Hymne B.§3). OB examples include: en gal lu₂ ti-ti ki aġ₂-me-en // *be-lum ra-bu-u₂ ša a-wi-lam bu-lu-ṭu₂ i-ra-mu*, '(Sum.: You are the) great lord (Nanna) who likes to let man live' (OB Akkadian *Hymn to Nanna*, 4); *mi-qi₃-it pa-ar-zi-il-li-im ša qa₂-aq-qa₂-ra i-ra-su₂*, '(Papulegara,) the iron meteorite that smashes the earth' (*Hymn to Papulegara C*, col. V 21'–22', also col. IV 14'–15'); *Inana C*, 3//*TIM* 9.20 obv. 8–9 (cited in the preceding notes on the Ištar-incantation).

⁵⁵ In the trilingual hymn to Iškur, *CTH* 314 (*KUB* 4.8 obv. 3'–4'), the Akk. participle *mu-ke-el*[...] ʾšā¹-mu-u u₃ *er-se-tim*, 'Holder of the (bond?; see Schwemer 2001: 192 n. 1319) of heaven and earth' is translated by Hitt. relative 'who holds': []KI-zi-pa-a[š] k[u]-i^š ḫar-zi; see also the predication of the Sun-goddess of Arinna: *ša-ra-a ku-iš da-aš-ki-ši ar-ḫa ku-iš pe₂-i^š-ši-iš-ki-ši*, '(You are the one) who chooses and who rejects' (*CTH* 383 = *KUB* 21.19+ col. I 9–10).

Hittite hymns and prayers to the Sun-god *CTH* 372–4. While it was always recognized that the long opening hymn to the Sun contained many individual elements of Babylonian origin, scholars nevertheless spoke, in the words of H. G. Güterbock, of a ‘free composition for which the Hittite poet has taken a great deal of inspiration from Babylonia’.⁵⁶ Yet recent work has shown that two central passages in the hymn and prayer are very closely matched by an Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn to the Sun-god Utu, which suggests that the composition may have been rather less free than scholars of Hittite have liked to think. While the details can be consulted elsewhere (Metcalf 2011), I would here like to present the facts that are particularly relevant to the argument of this study.

In an extensive opening hymn that is best preserved in *CTH* 372, the supplicant praises the Sun-god in conventional terms as an influential figure in the pantheon and a benevolent deity for mankind. Yet, remarkably, the hymn also refers to the Sun-god as the son of Enlil and Ningal, as wearing a beard of lapis-lazuli, and as driving a team of four lions. These and other predications in the Hittite hymn clearly betray their Babylonian origin and can easily be linked to Old Babylonian Sumerian parallels.⁵⁷ The instances in question are, however, individual passages that come up at different points in the opening hymn; in the absence of a single, literal model for the whole hymn, it was reasonable to speak of a free Hittite composition. This view must now be modified in the light of the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn *Utu the hero*, which provides an ultimate model for an extensive section of the praises of the Sun-god, cited here after *CTH* 372:

^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne šuku šum₂-mu
^dutu si-ġar an-na-ke₄ ġal₂ maḥ taka₄-taka₄
^{ġeš}ig an-na-ke₄ sila-ba bi₂-in-du₁₁
i-dub an-na-ke₄ dalla e₃-a teḫi-teḫi
diġir an-na-ke₄ ma-ra-su₈-ge-eš
diġir ki-ta gu₂ mu-ra-sun₅-sun₅-ne-eš
^dutu ka ba-zu giri₁₇ šu ḫa-pa-ġar (var.: -ġa₂-al)

⁵⁶ See esp. Haas (2006: 246–9), Wilhelm (1994: 61–8), Güterbock (1958: 241–2).

⁵⁷ See Metcalf (2011: 169–70). It had escaped my attention there that the provision of grain on the part of the supplicant for the animals of the Sun-god can be paralleled e.g. in the late OB/early MB bilingual prayer to Utu HS 1512, obv. 7 (ed. Krebernik 2001); see now Alaura and Bonechi (2012: 25–33) with further sources.

^dutu ad-da nu-sig₁₁-me-en

^dutu ama BA nu-mu-un-ukuš₂-me-en

^dutu ki-gul-la šu-ġar-ġi-ne-me-en

(When it comes to) giving subsistence to the Anuna,

Utu, imperiously drawing the bolt of heaven,

commands the door of heaven to open.

As you draw near the threshold of heaven, emerging in your radiance,

the gods of heaven stand for you,

the gods of the underworld bow to you.

Utu, your utterance commands a gesture of respect,

Utu, you are the father of the orphan,

Utu, you are the mother of the widow,

Utu, you are the avenger of the downtrodden.

(*Utu the hero*, 7–14)

DINGIR.MEŠ-aš-ša-an SISKUR₂ zi-ik-pat₂ z[(i-ik-ki-š)]i ka-ru-u₂-i-li-ia-aš-ša-an [DINGIR.ME]Š-na-aš HA.LA-[ŠU-NU z]i-ik-pat₂ zi-ik-ki-ši [ne]-ṛpi₂-ša-aš ^{giš}IG¹ a-ap-pa tu-uk-pat₂ ^dUTU-i ḥa-aš-kan₂-zi ṛnu-kan₂ ne¹-pi₂-ša-aš KA₂-aš zi-ik-pat₂ aš-ša-nu-wa¹-ṛan¹-za ^dUTU-uš¹ šar-re-eš-ki-ši nu ne-pi₂-ša-aš DINGIR.MEŠ-eš tu-uk-pat₂ kat-ta-an ka-ni-na-an-te-eš tak₂-na-aš-ša DINGIR.MEŠ-eš ṛtu¹-uk-pat₂ kat-ta-ṛan¹ ka-ni-na-an-te-eš ku-it-ṛta¹ ^dUTU-uš me-mi-iš-[k]i-ši DINGIR.MEŠ-ša a-[a]p-pa tu-uk-pat₂ a-ru-u₂-e-eš-kan₂-zi ^dUTU-uš dam-me-iš-ḥa-an-da-aš ku-ri-ṛim¹-ma-aš-š[a a]n-tu-uḫ-ḥa-aš at-ta-aš an-na-aš zi-ik ku-ri-im-[m]a-aš dam-m[i-i]š-ṛḥa-an-da-aš¹ an-tu-uḫ-ša-aš kat-ta-wa-a-tar zi-ik-[pa]t₂ ^dUTU-uš šar-ni-in-ki-iš-ki-ši

You distribute the offerings to the gods, you distribute the portions to the old gods. For you, Sun-god, they (the gods) keep reopening the door of heaven. You, revered Sun-god, cross the gate of heaven. The gods of heaven are bowing to you, and the gods of the underworld are bowing to you. Say what you will, Sun-god, and the gods incline to you. Sun-god, you are the father and mother of the oppressed and orphaned man. You, Sun-god, put right the grievance of the orphaned and oppressed man. (CTH 372 = KUB 31.127+ABOT 44+KUB 36.79 col. I 26–38 // KUB 31.133 col. I 8'–17' with minor variants)

The long prayer to the Sun-god that ensues is uttered by an unspecified 'mortal', which might have allowed for the name of a particular supplicant to be inserted if a version of the prayer was to be recited (thus Schwemer 2009). It is likely that the same hymn to the Sun-god preceded the earlier fragmentary prayer of a prince named Kantuzili (perhaps late 15th–early 14th century BC, CTH 373), and it certainly

preceded the prayer of an anonymous king (perhaps a model text, *CTH* 374). Most importantly, the opening hymn to the Sun-god was also adapted in a prayer of King Mursili II (1321–1295 BC, *CTH* 376. II).⁵⁸ Güterbock (1980: 49) has observed that this version, which is addressed not to a male Sun-god but to the Sun-goddess of Arinna, the chief deity of Hittite kingship,⁵⁹ presents a number of interesting omissions. In this version all references to the Sun-god's parents Ningal and Enlil have simply been skipped, as have his lapis-lazuli beard and his *elatio* at the hands of Enlil; the hymnic section also ends earlier, causing the Sun-god's chariot and his viziers to be omitted. Whether or not this improves the quality of the poem, as Güterbock (1980: 50) suggests, it is clear that the most obvious references to the male Babylonian Sun-god have been purged in order to accommodate the chief deity of the Hittite royal pantheon, the Sun-goddess of Arinna. Another telling modification is that, where *CTH* 372 invokes the Sun-god as 'king of heaven and earth, you clemently rule the land', Mursili's version has a slight variant that could refer to actual kingship on earth: 'you clemently rule the kingship of heaven and earth.'⁶⁰ But thanks to *Utu the hero*, we can now see that other ultimately Babylonian elements have been retained. The Sun-goddess of Arinna too is said to allot the portions of the gods and to cross the gate of heaven, even though, as the new evidence quoted from the Sumerian hymn shows, these images were also adapted from foreign models. This pantheon-scene, in which the deity is depicted as an object of reverence among the other gods, is perhaps of a sufficiently general character as to be appropriate not just to the Sumerian Sun-god but also to his Anatolian counterpart.⁶¹

⁵⁸ See now Schwemer (2009), Wilhelm (2010). *CTH* 374 is possibly the oldest extant version of the hymn.

⁵⁹ Since the time at least of Hattusili I (1650–1620 BC), the Sun-goddess of Arinna, a city near Hattusa, was seen as an important divine patron of Hittite kingship. See Haas (1994: 190, 425–6, 584–5), Yakubovich (2005), Popko (2009: 27–31).

⁶⁰ *ne-pi₂-ša-aš da-a-ga-zi-pa-aš-ša LUGAL-u-e KUR-e zi-ik du-ud-du-uš-ki-ši* (*CTH* 372 = *KUB* 31.127+ col. I 2–3 // *KUB* 31.128 col. I 2 with minor variants) versus *ne-pi₂-ša-aš-ša [tak₂-na]-aš-ša LUGAL-u-iz-na-tar zi-ik-pat₂ du-ud-du-uš-ki-ši* (*CTH* 376.II.A = *KUB* 24.3+ col. I 35'–36'). Conversely, the writer of Mursili's version has in two instances forgotten to convert masculine 'lord' into the feminine 'lady' that befits the Sun-goddess, but that is just an oversight due to the influence of the model rather than a significant variation.

⁶¹ The general character of the scene can perhaps be illustrated by the fact that a similar image occurs in a roughly contemporary Egyptian hymn to the Sun: 'Die

Mursili's prayer to the Sun-goddess of Arinna (CTH 376.II) prefaces the adapted hymn with a series of intriguing invocations. The first invocation is better preserved in a version found at the head of another prayer of King Mursili to the god Telipinu (CTH 377). It is worth quoting this invocation in full, following the Telipinu-version:

[ki-i]-kan₂ ʾTUP-PI₂ DUB.SAR A-NA DINGIR^{LIM} an-da UD-at UD-at
me-mi-iš-k[(i-iz)-zi]
[nu DING]IR^{LAM} wa-al-li-iš-ki-iz-zi
ʾṭ⁷ te-li-pi₂-nu-uš šar-ku-uš na-ak-ki-iš DINGIR-uš zi-ik
u-i-ia-at-mu ʾmur-ši-i-li LUGAL-uš tu-e-el ARAD-KA
MUNUS.LUGAL-aš-ša
tu-e-el GEME₂-KA u-i-e-er i-it-wa ʾte-li-pi₂-nu-un
an-ze-el EN-NI DINGIR^{LAM} ŠA SAG.DU-NI mu-ga-a-i
nu-za-kan₂ ma-a-an na-ak-ki-iš ʾte-li-pi₂-nu-uš še-er ne-pi₂-ši
DINGIR.MEŠ-aš iš-tar-na ma-a-an a-ru-ni na-aš-ma A-NA
ḪUR.SAG.MEŠ¹(EŠ)
wa-ḫa-an-na pa¹(AŠ₂)-a-an-za na-aš-ma-za I-NA KUR ʾlu₂KUR₂
za-aḫ-ḫi-ia pa-a-an-za
ki-nu-na-at-ta ša-ne-ez-zi-iš wa-ar-šu-la-aš ʾgišERIN-an-za I₃-an-za
kal-li-iš-du na-aš-ta EGIR-pa ʾe₂ka-ri-im-ni-it-ti an-da e-ḫu
nu-ut-ta ka-a-ša mu-ki-iš-ki-mi ʾnindaḫar-ši-it ʾduḡiš-pa-an-du-zi-it
nu-uš-ša-an pa-ra-a ka-la-a-an-kan₂-za e-eš nu-ut-ta ku-it
me-mi-iš-ki-mi nu-mu DINGIR^{LUM} iš-ta-ma-na-an la-ga-a-an ḫar-ak
na-at i[(š-t)a-ma-(aš-ki)]

The scribe reads out [this] tablet daily to the god and praises the god:

‘Telipinu, you are a powerful, revered god. King Mursili, your servant, sent me, as well as the queen, your servant. They sent (me): “Go! Invoke Telipinu, our lord, our personal god!”

‘Whether, revered Telepinu, you are above in heaven among the gods, or in the sea, or gone to the mountains to roam, or gone to battle in an enemy land,

‘now let the pleasant fragrance, the cedar and oil entice you! Come back to your temple!⁶² I am invoking you with bread and libations. Be

Götter verneigen sich vor Deiner Majestät und erhöhen die Macht ihres Schöpfers, jubelnd beim Nahen ihres Erzeugers’ (transl. Assmann 1991: 841).

⁶² The topos of invoking the god in this way (‘be you here or there’) is well known in Greek religious poetry and has good parallels in Indo-Iranian hymns according to West (2007: 321–2), who also notes further Hittite instances. See also Forlanini (2000) and Ch. 5.

peaceful and turn your ear to the things I am saying to you, (my) god, and keep listening to it!

(Hymn to Telipinu, CTH 377 = KUB 24.2 obv. 1–14 // KUB 24.1 + KBo 58.10, obv. 1–17 with minor variants)

Following this invocation, which is largely paralleled in the fragmentary opening of Mursili's hymn to the Sun-goddess of Arinna, the hymn to Telipinu reminds the god that his temples are cultivated only in the land of Hatti and exist in no other land, and that his festivals are also celebrated only in the land of Hatti and nowhere else. This section likewise runs parallel in the prayer to the Sun-goddess, which then launches into a second invocation (mostly broken off in the Telipinu-text):

zi-ik-za ^dUTU ^{uru}a-ri-in-na na-ak-ki-iš DINGIR^{LIM}-iš nu-ut-tak₂-kan₂
 ŠUM-an lam-na-aš iš-tar-na na-ak-ki-i DINGIR^{LIM}-ia-tar-ma-tak₂-
 kan₂ DINGIR.MEŠ-aš iš-tar-na na-ak-ki-i nam-ma-za-ṛkan₂⁷
 DINGIR.MEŠ-aš iš-tar-na zi-ik-pat₂ ^dUTU ^{uru}a-ri-in-na na-ak-ki-iš
 šal-le-eš-ša-az zi-ik-pat₂ ^dUTU ^{uru}a-ri-in-na nam-ma-tak₂-kan₂ da-
 ma-a-iš DINGIR^{LUM} na-ak-ki-iš šal-li-iš-ša U₂-UL e-eš-zi

You, Sun-goddess of Arinna, are a revered deity. Your name is revered among names, your divinity is revered among the gods. Among the gods you, Sun-goddess of Arinna, are indeed revered and great, Sun-goddess of Arinna. Indeed, no other god is more revered and great than you. (CTH 376.II.A = KUB 24.3+ col. I 29'–34')

At this point, the hymn to the Sun-goddess of Arinna segues into the praises of justice and of the deity's importance in the pantheon that have ultimately been adapted from the Old Babylonian model. So while one important part of Mursili's hymn to the Sun-goddess of Arinna draws on Babylonian sources, the invocations that introduce it do not seem to reflect Babylonian influence. Instead, the same introductory invocations are found in a hymn of the same king to the local Anatolian deity Telipinu (CTH 377): they stress that the deity is revered only in the land of Hatti, and nowhere else.⁶³ It is striking that although the invocation emphasizes the uniqueness of the Sun-goddess of Arinna and the distinctive character of her worship in Hatti, the ensuing hymn nevertheless uses predication that ultimately belonged to the Sumerian Sun-god Utu.⁶⁴ Perhaps this was

⁶³ See the commentary of Kassian and Yakubovich (2007) on the linguistic relationship between the hymn to the Sun-goddess and the hymn to Telipinu.

⁶⁴ Beckman (2012: 134) likewise emphasizes the fact that, in the case of these solar hymns, borrowed and translated material entered 'actual Hittite religious practice'.

not felt to be a contradiction, or perhaps the many workings and reworkings of the relevant material since (at least) the Middle Hittite period had eventually obscured its foreign origin.

Among the corpus of texts preserved only in Hittite there are a few independent hymns and hymnic prologues to narrative compositions. These hymns feature the 'Let me sing'-topos that occurs in the Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian material presented in Chapters 1 and 2 (see also Chapter 5). Hittite employs two verbs: *išhamai-*, 'to sing', which the Hittites equated with Sumerian 'ser₃', and Akkadian *zamārum*.⁶⁵ In the 'Let me sing'-topos, we find the form *išhamihhi*, 'let me sing'—the 1st sg. present seems in this case to be volitive, to judge by Hurrian (and possibly Sumerian) analogies⁶⁶—which corresponds to well-attested Akkadian *luzmur*, 'let me sing', or *azammar*, 'I shall sing', and Sumerian '(ser₃) ga-am₃-du₁₁/e', 'let me sing'. The other verb employed is idiomatic Hittite and has no obvious antecedents: *walla-*, conventionally translated as 'to praise', which apparently derives from the root 'to be strong' (Laroche 1964–5: 28; Kloekhorst 2008: 944–5).

Given the fact that Hittite hymnic poetry as a whole seems not to have developed independently, it seems possible that the 'Let me sing'-topos as we find it in Hittite is an imitation of Mesopotamian models. The fact that the same phrase occurs also in Hurrian (see examples later in this chapter) and in Hittite versions of Hurrian texts, such as the *Song of Ullikummi*, could suggest that the diffusion occurred through that language. None of the texts presented here were originally composed in Hittite.⁶⁷

The opening of the following fragmentary hymn to Ištar (CTH 717)⁶⁸ is not preserved, but one can infer from the opening of the second,

⁶⁵ See HW s.v. *išhamāi-*.

⁶⁶ See Metcalf (2011: 175 n. 28) with literature; compare also Tichy (2006: 226 with n. 98). The fluidity of temporal and modal categories (future and volitive) in such contexts is well known, see e.g. Wackernagel (1920–4: I 204–5), Calboli (2011: 122–4).

⁶⁷ In the case of Hittite and Greek, one must consider possible traces of Indo-European heritage. Although Hittite terms associated with prayer and praise such as *arkuwar* and *walliyatar* can be derived from Indo-European roots, according to Justus (2004) (note the critical remarks of Miller 2004: 459–60 n. 766), there is little evidence of such heritage in the form and content of the hymns, as Wilhelm (1994) showed. See, however, the Indo-Iranian examples of the 'Let me praise'-phrase given by Tichy (1994), not mentioned by West (1997: 170–3), and further discussion in Ch. 5.

⁶⁸ Written on a *Sammeltafel* along with the 'Story of the Sun-god, the cow and the fisherman' (CTH 363), see now Hutter (2011: 122–3).

third, and (probably) sixth stanza that the hymn began with the ‘Let me sing’-topos:

(2nd stanza)

[*wa-al-l[al]-aḫ-ḫi-ia-aš* ŠA ^dGAŠAN *ḫa-an-te-ez-zi-uš*
munusSUḪUR.LA₅.ḪI.A

[^d*ni-na*]-*at-ta-an* ^d*ku-li-it-ta-an* ^d*ši-en-tal-ir-te-in*

[^d*ḫa*]-*am-ra-zu-un-na-an*

Let me praise the first attendants of Ištar,

Ninatta, Kulitta, Šintal-Irte,

Hamrazuna,

(3rd stanza)

wa-al-la-aḫ-ḫi-ia-aš ŠA ^dGAŠAN *ap-pe₂-ez-zi-uš* munusSUḪUR.LA₅.ḪI.A

^d*a-li-in* ^d*ḫal-za-a-ri-in* ^d*ta-ru-wi₅-in*

^d*ši-na-an-da-du-kar-a-ni-in* *wa-al-la-aḫ-ḫi*

Let me praise the last attendants of Ištar,

Ali, Halzari, Taruwi,

Šinanda-durkarni let me praise,

(6th stanza)

[^dIŠTAR-*in*(?) *iš-ḫa*]-^r*mī* -*iš-ki-mi na-an* []

[Of Ištar] let me sing and [. . .] her.

(Hymn to Ištar, CTH 717 = KUB 24.7 col. I 12'–14', 22'–24', 56')

While the names of Ištar's attendants indicate a Hurrian origin, the hymn also contains a clear Mesopotamian reference in Ištar's consumption of her unfortunate husbands (LU₂.MEŠ-*uš* QA-TAM-MA [*zi*]-*in-ni-iš-ki-ši*, 'thus you keep finishing off men', col. II 14'–15').⁶⁹ Since the beginning and the end of the text are broken, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the hymn is formally dependent on Mesopotamian models mediated through Hurrian; the ambivalent depiction of Ištar and her attendants as wilful, unpredictable agents of strife as well as love seems consistent with Mesopotamian concepts, but it is phrased in a freewheeling, unconventional style that is unfamiliar from the Sumero-Akkadian and Hittite hymns considered so far. At least in the extant parts, the usual topoi (heaven and earth; function in

⁶⁹ The theme is familiar above all from a famous episode in tablet VI of SB Gilg., versions of which were known at Emar and Hattusa, see e.g. Güterbock (1984), Wilhelm (1994: 72), Haas (2006: 201). The late-OB/MB Akkadian *pārum*-hymn to Ištar HS 1879 (ed. von Soden 1991) and the OB Akkadian prayer CBS 19842, col. III 113–14 (ed. Lambert 1989), are also relevant here.

the pantheon; relevance to man; elevation by a chief god) do not occur.

Finally, there remain the hymnic introductions to narrative compositions. These are fragmentary as ever, but they do reflect Old Babylonian hymnic form, which ultimately goes back to Sumerian and may have been mediated through Hurrian:

ṛwa¹-al-la-[aḫ-ḫi]-ia-an^d[GIŠ.GIM.MAŠ]

UR-SAG-in

Let me praise(?) [Gilgamesh],⁷⁰

the hero.

(Opening of the Hittite version of *Gilgameš*, CTH 341.III = KUB 8.57 1–2)

(Six damaged lines that apparently describe the god Silver's pre-eminence in the pantheon)

[i]š-ha-mi-iḫ-ḫi-ia-an KU₃.BABBAR-an ša-ni-iz-z[i-in(?)]

Let me sing of Silver, the fine.

(*Song of Silver*, CTH 364 = HFAC 12.7)⁷¹

^dku-m[(ar-bi)]-ṛin¹ iš-ḫa-mi-iḫ-ḫi

(Fragmentary praises of Kumarbi's intelligence)

... of Kumarbi let me sing.

(*Song of Ullikummi*, CTH 345 = KUB 33.96+ obv. 1–4 //

KUB 33.98+ obv. 1–3)⁷²

One must add the proems to the bilingual Hurro-Hittite *Song of Release*⁷³ and to the Hurrian *Song of the Sea* (KUB 45.63, CTH 346. II; ed. Rutherford 2001a), which open on the phrase 'I will tell (or: sing)', *ši-i-ra(-a)-ti-li*.

⁷⁰ Restored according to Laroche (1964–5: 28 n. 8), Beckman (2003: 45), Haas (2006: 274). Beckman has announced a comprehensive edition of the Hittite *Gilgameš*, which, as Archi (2007) and Klinger (2005) have argued, reached the Hittites through Hurrian mediation.

⁷¹ Edition: Hoffner (1988).

⁷² Edition: Güterbock (1951), E. Rieken *et al.* (eds.) <hethiter.net/> CTH 345.I.1. 'Let me sing' seems to have stood in the first line in KUB 33.98+.

⁷³ 'Erzählen will ich von Teššub (*ši-ra-ti-li* ^diškur-ub), dem g[roßen] / König von Kummi, preisen will ich die jun[ge Frau] / Allāni am Riegelwerk der Erde. / Und (zusammen) mit ihnen will ic[h] / von der jungen Frau Išḫara, der an Wort(en) geschick[ten], / an Weisheit berühmten Göttin, sprechen (*ka-ti-il-li*). / Von Pizikarra will ich sprechen (*ka-ti-il-li*), der [] nach[?] E[bla] / hinbringen wird' (*Song of Release*, CTH 789 = KBo 32.11 col. I 1–8, transl. Neu 1996: 30).

The fragmentary state of the sources makes it difficult to attempt a synthesis. It is probably true that, as Wilhelm (1994: 74) put it, one cannot speak of a distinctively Hittite hymnic genre. Instead we find elements of hymns in Hittite royal prayers and in prologues to narrative poems, as well as Hittite versions of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and incantations. It seems that Hittitologists tend to avoid these texts because they consider them to belong essentially to the domain of Assyriology, but specialists of Sumerian and Akkadian literature likewise disregard them because of their peripheral origin. And it is true that even those compositions that seem to derive straightforwardly from Sumero-Akkadian models might show signs of influence from Hittite or Hurrian thought. In the case of the hymns to the Storm-god, I have suggested that the hyperbolic predications applied there (his elevation to Enlilship, his position as the uniquely great god) mean that it is perhaps too simple to speak of a didactic reception of Sumero-Akkadian hymns ('schulmäßige Rezeption sumerisch-akkadischer Hymnen', Wilhelm 1994: 74).⁷⁴ The process of transmission will have been more complex, for the putative 'originals' must already have reflected a strong theological bias in favour of the Storm-god to which we can as yet not find parallels in the available Old Babylonian Sumero-Akkadian sources. Further, the fact that the Hittites seem to have selected Sumero-Akkadian hymns according to their own religious priorities suggests that these translations were not mere exercises, although (subsequent?) didactic use for the education of scribes in foreign literature is not excluded. The case of the hymn to the Sun-god shows that adapted passages from originally Old Babylonian Sumerian sources unquestionably entered Hittite hymns and prayers to Anatolian deities, which is an important example of translation and adaptation of Mesopotamian religious literature abroad. Chapter 8 will attempt to show that the process of adaptation did not stop at the Hittite texts discussed here, but touched further areas of Hittite literature and possibly spread further west, leading ultimately to certain early Greek sources.

⁷⁴ A similar qualification has recently been made, though only in passing, by Lorenz and Rieken (2010: 226 n. 24), who note 'die religiöse Bedeutung dieser Texte [i.e. of imported hymnic literature] auch bei den Hethitern'.

Introductory Remarks on the Early Greek and Mesopotamian Sources

The following pages contain a few general remarks on the form and content of Greek hymns, concentrating on the earliest available evidence, along with some comparative observations. Selected topoi and passages will be discussed and compared in detail in the chapters that follow this introductory overview.

THE NATURE OF THE TEXTS

Already at the earliest accessible stage, in the 8th–6th centuries BC, Greek hymnic poetry takes a variety of forms. One such form is the metre and language of the Homeric poems that are displayed by the so-called *Homeric Hymns*, a collection of thirty-three compositions of various dates and occasions. As usual, information on their historical context must be extracted mainly from the text of the hymns themselves. *Hom. h.* 3.146–78 describes at length an Ionian festival of Apollo on Delos that the singer seems to be witnessing. Like the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn *Iddin-Dagan A* (to Inana), this hymn to Apollo not only praises the god but also depicts the religious occasion at which the poet is present. In a rare historical testimonium, Thucydides (3.104) quotes extracts from a version of this passage as an illustration of the Delian festival in the old days (τὸ πάλαι, see discussion in the following section). The second part of the same hymn later describes a singing procession to Delphi led by Apollo himself (*Hom. h.* 3.514–19), which may have served as a mythological

archetype for such processions by his actual worshippers.¹ It seems that the singing of hymns could also feature in a rhapsodic contest, for in the *preces* of *Hom. h.* 6.19–20 the poet asks Aphrodite to grant him victory and to assist his singing.² *Hom. h.* 29 mentions banquets (ἐὶλαπίναι, 5) where men honour Hestia, pointing to yet another context in which early hymns could be produced.³ In some cases, notably the long hymns to Demeter and Aphrodite (*Hom. h.* 2 and 5), the extent to which the hymn relates to the practical worship of the gods remains unclear: in the former case, due to the secrecy that obscures many details of the Eleusinian mysteries, in the latter, due to the lack of overt references to context and because of the unflattering depiction of Aphrodite.⁴ *Hom. h.* 5 is also generally assumed to be the oldest piece in the collection, being placed very close to the *Iliad*.⁵ Although many of the *Homeric Hymns* are probably not archaic, almost all of them do reflect the style and content of the older pieces, and I therefore refer to this collection extensively, as well as to parallels in Homer and Hesiod.⁶

Hymns could be composed not only in dactylic hexameters but also in a wide variety of other styles, as E. Pöhlmann's recent overview in *MGG*² s.v. *Hymnus* I.3 illustrates. There is, in Greek as much as in Sumerian or Akkadian, no single hymnic metre, and the *topoi* of form and content that make up the Greek hymnic style seem to operate

¹ See further Rutherford (2001*b*: 63–8), Herda (2006: 100–15, 265–71). Heubeck (1966) has shown that the quotations in Thuc. from the 'Delian' part of *Hom. h.* 3 cannot be used to support an Analytic reading of the hymn.

² See the following section on hymns as opening pieces. Pausanias, an important source on early religious poetry in general (see *AHS* lxxiii–vii and Pirenne-Delforge 2008: 139), records that the singing of hymns to the god (ἄσαι ὕμνον ἐς τὸν θεόν) was the oldest contest (ἀγώνισμα) at Delphi, and the one for which prizes were first offered (10.7.2–4). The cithara was, according to the same passage, the original accompaniment whereas recitations with the aulos were introduced later (similarly Str. 9.3.10); on this and later developments see Almazova (2008), Pöhlmann and Spiliopoulou (2010). On rhapsodes at festivals see Pl. *Ion* 530a, and in general Herington (1985: Appendices I–II) and West (2010) (= West 2013*b*: 347–68).

³ On singing the gods in a sympotic context see Alc. fr. 98 with Rutherford (2001*b*: 50–2), Xenoph. 1.13–14 West with Furley and Bremer (2001: I 44 and 161–2), *Ion* 27.5–8 West. On *Hom. h.* 29 see recently Gelzer (2003).

⁴ See esp. Parker (1991), Richardson (2011: 50–3), Obbink (2013: 177–9) on *Hom. h.* 2 and Faulkner (2008: 3–18), Richardson (2010: 27–31) on *Hom. h.* 5.

⁵ See most recently Janko (2011: 21 with n. 3); compare Olson (2012: 10–15).

⁶ Chapter 5 on hymnic openings will help to illustrate the formal consistency of the *Hom. h.* On this point see further Janko (1981a) and Pavese (1991), on the individual dates of the *Hom. h.* see West (2003a: 6–20), Faulkner (2011: 7–16).

independently of the rhythmic arrangement and the accompanying instrumentation.⁷ A broad range of occasions can also be assumed for the composition of non-hexametric hymns, but here the early evidence is fragmentary. In particular, the Lesbian poet Alcaeus (late 7th–early 6th century BC) composed a number of important hymns, of which only a few stanzas and incipits are preserved. Their style and themes appear to resemble the *Homeric Hymns*.⁸ The same is true of some of the exiguous fragments attributed to Terpander, supposedly an even earlier poet, also from Lesbos.⁹ We possess fragments of hymns by various later lyric poets, particularly by Pindar (first half of the 5th century BC), whose epinician poetry also adapts conventional hymnic elements.¹⁰ Better preserved are the hymns recorded in inscriptions at major religious centres such as Delphi or Epidauros. While these important sources are generally considered to be of late classical or later date, many are clearly composed according to the same inherited conventions that are exhibited by older hymns.¹¹ Finally, the Greek gods are frequently invoked and praised in hymnic fashion by the characters of Athenian drama. Such hymns may form gnomic or ironic counterpoints to the events unfolding on the human scene. The gods may also be called upon to assist the characters in a crisis or to join them in celebration. For the purposes of the present study, such passages in drama (particularly in Euripides and Aristophanes, mid-to-late 5th and late 5th-to-early 4th centuries BC) are useful in so far as they imitate or parody conventional formal elements of hymnic composition.¹²

⁷ Some internally consistent patterns may of course be discerned: see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1933: 289–93) on the hymn to Heracles in Eur. *HF* 348–441 and the metrical affinity of its rhythmic refrain to possible older solemn tunes (further Herington 1985: 221–2); West (1982: 142–3) on Ionic rhythms in F–B 6.4 (to Apollo and Asclepius) and F–B 1.1 (to Zeus Kouros); Faraone (2011) on F–B 6.1 (to Apollo and Asclepius) and other dactylic paeans.

⁸ See Meyer (1933: 48–9), Danielewicz (1974: 26–30), Cairns (1983), West (2002: 216–17) (= West 2011*d*: 404–5), West (2012: 234). Tsomis (2001: 38–96) provides a commentary on the fragments of hymns and prayers of Alcaeus; on the prayers of Sappho see Burzacchini (2005).

⁹ See esp. Meyer (1933: 32–5) on his hymnic fragments.

¹⁰ See Meyer (1933: 54–69), Race (1990: 85–117), Bremer (2008), Pitotto (2009).

¹¹ See e.g. Crusius (1894: 141) on the hymns to Apollo from Delphi, Käppel (1992: 196–7) on F–B 6.1 (to Apollo and Asclepius). According to Alonge (2011), such inscriptions were probably made to commemorate particular occasions on which the hymns had been sung.

¹² Corpora for Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes have been compiled by Dorsch (1983) and Horn (1970). See further Fraenkel (1931), Kleinknecht (1937: 20–130), Fraenkel (1962: 191–215), Rutherford (1995), Willi (2003: 8–50),

As in past chapters, the following discussion will focus on formal features. In Greece as much as in Mesopotamia, hymns in general seem to be a conservative type of poetry that is marked by certain more or less variable *topoi*. These *topoi* offer the best starting-point for a comparative discussion. The fundamental works on the form and conventional language of Greek hymns are Norden (1913: 143–76) and Keyßner (1932), and much of this overview follows their lead.¹³ While Norden and Keyßner have convincingly described the conventions that distinguish the language of Greek hymns from the earliest available sources onwards, some later scholarship has tried to introduce distinctions that differentiate between particular types of religious poetry. Perhaps the most influential such distinction, and certainly the most relevant to the method of the present study, is the supposed contrast between ‘epic’ (or ‘rhapsodic’) versus ‘cult’ hymns. For instance, the authors of a major recent anthology entitled *Greek Hymns: Selected Cult Songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period* explain that the *Homeric Hymns* have been excluded from their selection, ‘partly because excellent editions of them exist, and partly because they are not cult hymns in any real sense’ (Furley and Bremer 2001: I 43). No further explanation of the latter argument is offered, but elsewhere one reads that the *Homeric Hymns* are a type of hymn that was ‘composed primarily for the entertainment and enlightenment of the listeners’ (Furley and Bremer 2001: I 61). This points to an implied distinction between ‘real cult hymns’ as opposed to ‘epic’ hymns (like the *Homeric Hymns*) that served primarily non-cultic purposes, such as entertainment.¹⁴ Apart from the obvious fact that the *Homeric Hymns* are a diverse collection of songs composed

Damen and Richards (2012). For a sophisticated analysis of the use of paeans in tragedy, see now Swift (2010: 61–103), who notes in particular ‘ironic effect’ and enhanced ‘presentation of the divine’.

¹³ Relevant recent studies include: Danielewicz (1976), Bremer (1981), Race (1982a), contributions to Cassio and Cerri (1991), Furley (1993), Burkert (1994), Furley (1995), la Bua (1999: 1–89), Depew (2000), contributions to Lehmann (2007), West (2007: 304–25), Paulsen (2009), and the entire vol. 64 of *Paideia* (2009). Recent surveys of particular corpora include: Lenz (1975: 9–21), Parker (1991), Fröhder (1994), Furley and Bremer (2001), Morand (2001), Vamvouri Ruffy (2004), Zuntz (2005), Strauss Clay (2006), contributions to Faulkner (2011), and Bouchon, Brillet-Dubois, and Le Meur-Weissman (2012).

¹⁴ Compare their earlier comments (Furley and Bremer 2001: I 2) on the ‘cult hymn’ versus ‘literature’.

for a variety of occasions (as has just been discussed in the preceding pages), there are other reasons to disagree with such a distinction.

The stylistic awkwardness of the phrase 'cult hymn' betrays its origin, for it is in fact an English rendering of *Kulthymnus*, a term introduced by Meyer (1933: 1–8). The characteristic elements of the *Kulthymnus* are, according to Meyer: an invocation in the vocative (e.g. 'come hither') accompanied by flattering epithets; extensive praises of the deity; a reminder of the special connection between the deity and the supplicant; and finally a brief prayer of general character. In contrast to the *Kulthymnus*, the *epischer Hymnus* (to which type the *Homeric Hymns* belong) is marked by an expansion of the narrative element. In formal terms, the *epischer Hymnus* is further distinguished by the fact that it opens on an announcement of the type 'Let me sing' rather than on a vocative. Meyer does not use any single text to illustrate all the elements that make up his definition of the *Kulthymnus*, which is beyond our grasp ('uns nicht mehr direkt faßbar') because no examples of archaic Greek *Kultpoesie* have survived. It is important to realize that, in Meyer's definition, the *Kulthymnus* is an ideal type, the lost *ur-form* of the archaic Greek hymn, which he distinguishes from the *epischer Hymnus* primarily due to formal differences. The former point in particular has been overlooked by later scholarship.

Bundy (1972: 44–5) subsequently adopted Meyer's distinction between *Kulthymnus* (now 'cult hymn') and *epischer Hymnus* (now 'rhapsodic hymn'), adding that the former is 'ritual' and the latter 'secular'. In direct but unacknowledged contradiction to Meyer, Bundy postulated that the most important element of the 'cult hymn' is the prayer.¹⁵ Bundy's position was maintained in influential publications by his pupils Miller (1986: 1–9) and Race (1990: 102–6; 1992: 19–36), who show no awareness of the sense of the term *Kulthymnus* as intended by Meyer. The views of Furley and Bremer (2001: I 43) on the nature of the *Homeric Hymns* as non-cultic also seem to stand in the tradition of Meyer's *Kulthymnus* versus *epischer Hymnus*, although in their analysis the distinction seems to be based primarily on purpose (real 'cult' versus entertainment) rather than on

¹⁵ The note 'See Meyer' (where?) in Bundy (1972: 45 n. 24) is misleading, since Meyer states exactly the opposite ('Die [Bitte im Kulthymnus] tritt aber ganz zurück; wir haben sie uns meist als sehr kurz und allgemeiner Natur vorzustellen', Meyer 1933: 5–6).

form. This may be compared to Bundy's apodictic designation, without further argument, of the 'cult hymn' as being 'ritual' and the 'rhapsodic hymn' as being 'secular'. Similarly, Faulkner (2011: 20–1) now draws a distinction between cult hymns and the *Homeric Hymns*, the latter being 'much less attached to particular ritual contexts, and much more strongly linked to the literary Panhellenic theologies of Homer and Hesiod'.

The terms *Kulthymnus* and 'cult hymn' are clearly understood in quite different ways by different scholars. From the point of view of the present study, the prevailing distinction between 'cult' versus 'epic' hymns (or variations of these labels) is open to criticism in several respects. The following chapter will illustrate that the distribution of the two types of hymnic opening used by Meyer as a main formal criterion to distinguish 'cult' from 'epic', namely vocative versus 'Let me sing', is not as neat as his presentation of the evidence suggests. The opening of the epic-hexametric *Works and Days* of Hesiod calls on the Muses to tell of Zeus, but also invites the Muses to come 'hither' to the singer, although that is supposedly a classic *kulthymnisch* feature.¹⁶ While Meyer (1933: 3) does not make clear quite what he means by the conventional *Kulthandlung* in which the *Kulthymnus* was originally situated, compositions that presumably belong to a close approximation of an actual *Kulthandlung*—such as F–B 6.5, the hymn to Pan from Epidauros—conversely open on a 'Let me sing'-phrase, just like some of the 'epic' *Homeric Hymns*. The well-known opening of Alcaeus fr. 308, a hymn to Hermes, combines a 'cultic' element, the invocation of the deity (*Χαῖρε Κυλλάνας ὁ μέδεις*), with an announcement of the 'Let me sing'-type, which is supposed to be 'epic' (*σὲ γάρ μοι / θῦμος ὕμνην*).¹⁷

The present study will distinguish between clearly visible categories of form, as can be observed, for example, in different types of hymnic openings, but will not try to explain such distinctions with recourse to hypothetical *ur*-forms in the manner of Meyer. With respect to the

¹⁶ Meyer (1933: 39) attributed this apparent mixture of 'epic' and 'cultic' elements to Hesiod's idiosyncratic personality. Race (1992: 31–2) accommodates the opening of Hes. *Op.* under the rubric 'Combinations and innovations' in his schema.

¹⁷ The last example was pointed out by Devlin (1994: 111–12), who also notes the occurrence of 'Let me sing' openings in hymns like F–B 6.5 (to Pan), which it would be absurd to call 'epic' (or 'rhapsodic'). Pind. *Pae.* 2.1–4 (see Rutherford 2001b: 74 n. 20) and Terp. fr. 3 are further clear examples of ('cultic') vocative followed by ('epic') 'Let me sing'.

term 'cult hymn' as adapted by Bundy and his followers, my definition of the term 'hymn' is, as in previous chapters, a song in praise of a god. Certain texts designated as 'cult hymns' by Race (1992: 29), such as Sappho fr. 1, are prayers in my definition, simply because the prayer, not the praise, seems to be the main subject of the poem.¹⁸ Since hymns and prayers are of course closely related, the latter will be mentioned frequently in the following discussion, even though they do not form part of the core corpus.

The second and more important criticism is that the meaning of the term 'cult' in 'cult hymn' seems to lack a clear definition. Meyer himself did not try to identify any early 'cult hymns'. As discussed at the beginning of the present chapter, the corpus of *Homeric Hymns* comprises a very diverse group of compositions. If the term 'cult' is to imply a strong connection to the practical worship of the gods, then it seems best to assess the strength of this connection in each hymn individually. More recent scholarship has indeed emphasized the 'cultic' uses of the shorter *Homeric Hymns*, thereby questioning the excessively neat 'cult'-versus-'epic' dichotomy.¹⁹ The following discussion of certain key hymnic topoi (e.g. Olympian *τιμῇ* in hymns) will further illustrate that theoretical distinctions along such lines are often difficult to maintain in practice.

Above all, I resist the idea that early hymnic poetry should be divided into 'cult hymns' in the 'real sense' and other hymns that were composed 'primarily for entertainment and enlightenment', as the somewhat vague comments of Furley and Bremer (2001: I 43 and 61) suggest. I do not deny that hymns were composed for a wide variety of purposes, but in the archaic period, worship of the gods and entertainment do not seem mutually exclusive. The important description of the Delian festival in the long *Homeric Hymn* to Apollo uses the verbs *τέρπειν* and *τέρπεσθαι* of the god who 'delights' in the festival, of the human participants 'delighting' the god with their

¹⁸ Compare the comment of Race (1992: 28): 'When the request predominates, the cultic hymn becomes indistinguishable from a prayer'. My use of the terms 'hymn' and 'prayer' is very similar e.g. to the definitions of 'Götterhymnos' and 'Gebet' given by Tsomis (2001: 38) in his recent overview of early Greek monodic lyric.

¹⁹ See Paz de Hoz (1998) and esp. García (2002), Richardson (2011: 53 n. 25), Nagy (2011: 306 n. 78), Pörtulas (2012: 235–40), Bouchon, Brillet-Dubois, and Le Meur-Weissman (2012: 10). It is true that some of the hymns later ascribed to Homer were admired particularly for their skilful composition rather than for their effectiveness in worshipping the gods, at least when compared to ritual chants (Paus. 9.30.12).

dancing and singing, of an imagined onlooker who ‘delights’ in the whole spectacle, and finally of the Delian maidens who ‘delight’ in the singer himself (*Hom. h.* 3.146–55, 170–3). It seems that the notion of *τέρπειν/τέρπεσθαι* encompasses not only the act of worship and the god’s response but also the pleasure that a detached spectator and the participants take in the festival. Any distinction between ‘entertainment’ and serious religious worship seems artificial.

FORM AND CONTENT

To turn to the sources, our earliest piece is probably the hymn to the Muses contained in the proem to the *Theogony* of Hesiod (late 8th century BC):

Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ’ αἰεῖδεν,

αἶθ’ ἑλίκωνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζάθεόν τε

Let us begin our singing from the Heliconian Muses
who hold the great and sacred mount Helicon.

(Hes. *Th.* 1–2)

The concept of beginning from a certain god is central to many hymnic openings. Some hymns were indeed opening pieces: hence the closing phrase found in several of the *Homeric Hymns*, ‘... after beginning (*ἀρξάμενος*) from you, I shall go on to another song’ (*Hom. h.* 5.293, 9.9, 18.11; see also 13.3, 32.17–20).²⁰ The singer may even announce that he will not only begin from but also end (*λήγειν, παύεσθαι*) on the god, even though he does not always honour the commitment subsequently.²¹

Later evidence suggests that some hymns, among them the Delian part of *Hom. h.* 3 and Alcaeus fr. 307, were thought of as a *προοίμιον*,

²⁰ For the concept of beginning from (*ἀρχεσθαι* + gen.) or first singing of a god (*ἀρχεσθαι αἰεῖδεν* + acc.)—Hesiod conflates the two, compare *Hom. h.* 9.8—see further *Th.* 36, *Hom. h.* 2.1, 11.1, 13.1–3, 16.1, 22.1, 25.1, 26.1, 28.1, 31.1, Alc. fr. 29, PMG fr. adesp. 20e, Archil. fr. 120 West, Pind. *Pae.* 7b.8 and in general Keyßner (1932: 9–11). Compare also *Hom. h.* 3.158–61, *Od.* 8.499, Terp. fr. 3, Thgn. 1–4, Archil. fr. 121 West, Pind. *N.* 1.1–5, *N.* 5.25–6, fr. 75.7–8, 89a, PMG 737b.2, 851b.5.

²¹ Examples in Keyßner (1932: 13–14) and West (1966: 166–7 ad 34). Such phrases are imitated to flattering effect at *Il.* 9.97 (*ἐν σοὶ μὲν λήξω, σέο δ’ ἄρξομαι*, Nestor addressing Agamemnon).

a term first found in Pindar and described by him as the foundation-stone of song (κρηπῖδ' αἰοιδᾶν, *P.* 7.1–3).²² Hymnic preludes seem to have been attached to a wide variety of compositions, as illustrated by Hesiod's two theogonic and didactic works,²³ the Theognidean corpus of elegies, and *Hom. h.* 31 and 32, where it is said that tales or catalogues of heroes are to follow (31.18–19, 32.18–20). A short opener addressed to the Muses or to Zeus may have been a default choice, a standard element of the poetic repertoire.²⁴

From a Near Eastern perspective, hymnic openings in narrative poetry are attested already in OB Sumerian and later in Akkadian and Hittite as well. Free-standing hymns were sung at religious festivals. There are however no parallels to the Greek concept of beginning from and ending on the god, or singing him first and last.

Hymns were clearly intended to be sung, at least in early times. In *Hom. h.* 6 we hear the poet request 'victory in this competition' (ἐν ἁγῶνι / νίκην τῷδε) from Aphrodite (19–20). Given that the context is not specified, this opener might have been used on several occasions.²⁵ Another ἁγών, but perhaps in the more general sense of 'assembly', is described at greater length in *Hom. h.* 3.146–78, where the Ionians and neighbouring islanders box, dance, and sing on Delos in celebration of Apollo. Thucydides, in discussing the Athenians' purification of the island and the re-establishment of the Delian festival (winter of 426/5 BC), quotes some of these lines as an authentic Homeric description of what used to go on there in ancient times (τὸ πάλαι, 3.104). But the hymn does not refer to its own

²² See the evidence collected by West (2003a: 3–4). The reference to Alc. fr. 307 is Paus. 10.8.10 (but *Him. Or.* 48.10 Colonna speaks of a paean, see Rutherford 2001b: 27–8). Hornblower (1997: 529) states that when Thuc. 3.104 quotes from the Delian part of *Hom. h.* 3 as from a *προοίμιον*, it 'seems inescapable that the word *prooimion* here means simply "hymn"'. Surveying the attestations in Pindar, Aeschylus, Plato, and later authors, Koller (1956: 187–95) had, however, shown that the more specific 'prelude' is probably correct. See also Fraenkel (1978: 557–8) on Aesch. A. 1216, Lenz (1980: 83–96) on the openings of *Il.* and *Od.* compared to the *Hom. h.*, Faulkner (2008: 298) on *Hom. h.* 5.292–3, and the general *προοίμιον*-surveys of Constantini and Lallot (1987) and Power (2010: 187–200).

²³ See esp. Friedländer (1914), Meyer (1933: 38–9), and Minton (1970) on the close formal relationship of the poem of Hes. *Th.* and the *Hom. h.* Furley (2011: 210–12) has more recently resumed the discussion.

²⁴ Compare Pind. *N.* 2.1–3, *N.* 7.80–1, fr. 75.7–9.

²⁵ West (2010: 1–2) (= West 2013b: 348–9) suggests a connection to a panegyris on the road to Old Paphos mentioned by Str. 14.6.3.

historical circumstances, nor does it say how often it was put on or whether or not it was composed for a particular occasion. The Ionian festival seems to take place in a timeless present. Modern chronological estimates and historical reconstructions must therefore remain uncertain.²⁶

Analogous problems in the other corpora: hymns frequently refer to the context of their own performance, describing music, singing, processions, banquets, etc., but avoid concrete historical details (apart from the name of the king, which is mentioned only if there is a prayer on his behalf). See e.g. *Iddin-Dagan A* (Sumerian) and *Agišaya A–B* (Akkadian) and the discussions in Chapters 1 and 2. Performance of singers in competition (in the sense of Gk. ἀγών) is not attested in Mesopotamian or Anatolian sources.²⁷

The singer may summon the god(s) ‘hither’ as he begins. This is an essential element of the hypothetical schema of the early *Kulthymnus* according to Meyer (1933: 3); it is attested particularly in non-Homeric hymns, but also at the opening of Hesiod’s *Works and Days*.²⁸

A very clear and interesting parallel is available in Hittite: see West (1997: 272) and the discussion on cletic invocations in Chapter 5.

How would an early poet have referred to his song of praise? The word ὕμνος, frequent in Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns*, is thought to have meant ‘song’ originally, whereas the more specific sense ‘song in praise of a god’ is supposed to have arisen later. Thus *Hom. h.* 3.158–64 tells how the Delian maidens, after first singing (ἐπεὶ ἄρ’ πρῶτον . . . ὑμνήσωσιν) of Apollo, then Leto and Artemis, have turned

²⁶ See recently Richardson (2010: 13–15), Tausend (2012: 70–2). The next most impressive descriptions of a festival in a hymn are probably Pindar’s dithyrambic fr. 75.13–19 and later F–B 2.6.1 (to Apollo): 8–17; see also Pind. *Pae.* 6.15–18, 15.1–8. Seasonal performance is implied e.g. by the closing of *Hom. h.* 26.11–13: ‘Thus I salute you, Dionysus rich in grape-bunches / grant that we may happily come again in the season / each time in turn for many years (εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς)’ and also by the appeal to Zeus Kouros in the Cretan hymn F–B 1.1 (refrain: Δίκταν ἐς ἐνιαυτὸν ἔρπε / καὶ γέγαθι μολπῇ); compare Pind. fr. 128c.1–2: Ἐντι μὲν χρυσαλακάτου τεκέων Λατοῦς αἰοδαί / ὦ[ρ]υαι παιάνιδες, with Käppel (1992: 34–5).

²⁷ Although singers took part in battles staged in Hittite ritual: see Schuol (2004: 205) and further Rutherford (2008: 79).

²⁸ See Sapph. fr. 53, 127, 128, Alc. fr. 34.1–2, Stesich. 193, 240, Pind. fr. 75.1, F–B 6.2 (to the Mother of the Gods): 1–4; compare Sapph. 1.5, 2.1, Anacr. 12.6–7, Pind. N. 3.1–3, refrain of F–B 1.1 (to Zeus Kouros).

their minds to the men and women of old and are now performing a song (*ῥμνον ἀείδουσιν*) that charms the listeners. The poet goes on to praise the maidens' ability to imitate the voices of all people: each of them would think he was speaking himself, so well is their lovely song (*ἀοιδή*) constructed. This juxtaposition of *ῥμνος* and *ἀοιδή* is reminiscent of the only occurrence of *ῥμνος* in Homer (*ἀοιδῆς ῥμνον ἀκούων*, *Od.* 8.429) and Hesiod's initiation by the Muses, in which he is instructed to sing (*ὑμνεῖν*, *Th.* 33) of the generation of the eternal gods, but always to sing (*αἰὲν ἀείδειν*, 34) of the Muses first and last. In the *Homeric Hymns* the closing, verse-final phrase 'I will go on to another song' (*μεταβήσομαι ἄλλον ἐς ῥμνον*) stands in for whatever title might introduce the next piece.²⁹

The Delian passage shows that a *ῥμνος* could be sung about the tales of mortals of old as well as about the gods.³⁰ In a semantic movement from the general to the particular, later sources tend to reserve the term *ῥμνος* for the gods.³¹ The earlier sense of *ῥμνος* therefore agrees with the modern definition 'song in praise of a deity' in so far as it covers an introductory piece in praise of a deity (as performed by the Delian maidens), but it also has wider uses (singing of the glory and toils of men).

There also exist technical terms for specific kinds of hymns. Apart from the *προοίμιον*, the *παιάν* (paean) and the *διθύραμβος* (dithyramb) in particular seem to have been established at an early stage. These sub-genres are defined less by unique formal characteristics—that is to say, formal features that appear only there and not in any other kinds of hymns—than by the circumstances of the particular occasion. The paean, mentioned already at *Il.* 1.473 and 22.391, was commonly addressed to Apollo and related deities. Its purpose was for a community of worshippers to secure divine assistance in critical moments such as times of disease or war, but also at marriages and births. Little of this genre is preserved, and the earliest extensive examples that are available (Pindar) seem to belong to a late stage

²⁹ Compare *σέο δ' ἐγὼ ἀρξάμενος μεταβήσομαι ἄλλον ἐς ῥμνον* (*Hom. h.* 5.293) to *ἐκ σέο δ' ἀρξάμενος κλήσω μερόπων γένος ἀνδρῶν* (*Hom. h.* 31.18).

³⁰ Compare the use of *ῥμνος* and *ὑμνεῖν* at *Hom. h.* 3.178 (god), 189–91 (men), *Hes. Th.* 11–21 (gods), 99–101 (men and gods).

³¹ Following *Pl. Lg.* 700b and *R.* 607a. Relevant discussions: Färber (1936: 46–7), Schröder (1999: 60–1 n. 1, 97–100), Furley and Bremer (2001: I 9–10), Rutherford (2001b: 113), Swift (2010: 20–1), Nagy (2011: 313–33).

in its development.³² The early history of the dithyramb, a choral hymn for Dionysus first mentioned by Archilochus (fr. 120 West), is completely obscure. Pindar and Bacchylides again provide the earliest substantial samples, and again this appears to represent an advanced stage in the development.³³ Plato (*Lg.* 700b and 799e) also refers to citharodic *νόμοι* (melodies) as an old genre, perhaps alluded to at *Hom. h.* 3.20, and some such early *νόμοι*, usually associated with the name Terpander, may be thought of as monodic hymns or hymnic preludes to epic. But we have no coherent examples from the archaic stage to which Plato is referring.³⁴

The situation in OB Sumerian, which preserves the most elaborate system of generic classification among the Near Eastern corpora, is to a certain extent analogous. Sumerian hymns fall on the one hand under a general term meaning 'song' ('*ser*₃', compare *ᾠμος*), complemented on the other hand by technical and therefore frequently obscure terms for particular types of hymns ('*adab*', '*tigi*', referring to different kinds of musical accompaniment and thus perhaps to different occasions for which the hymn was composed). The fact that songs in praise of gods appear to have been known simply as 'songs' in both Sumerian and Greek suggests that praising and praying may be as old as singing itself, and hymns do indeed appear amongst the very earliest available literary texts in the mid-3rd millennium BC. To define the hymn as a song in praise of a god is to choose an intermediate solution: more specific than the general sense of the ancient terms, but at the same time more general than the technical ancient terms.

At the opening of a Greek hymn, the singer tends to name the god right away in the first verse, indeed often in the first word. Usually the name is either in the accusative, being the object of a 'Let me sing'-phrase, or in the vocative:

³² Rutherford (2001*b*: 170). On the paean see Käppel (1992: esp. 61–86, 286–8), Schröder (1999: esp. 31–61), Rutherford (2001*b*: 6–136), Rutherford (2013: 163–9). The inconsistent relation of the *ᾠμος* to paeans and other sub-genres in ancient systematizations is discussed by Furley and Bremer (2001: I 10–14, 190) and Rutherford (2001*b*: 92 with n. 3).

³³ Given the confusion between paean and dithyramb that was possibly induced by Bacch. 17, on which see Käppel (1992: 183–9), Fearn (2013: 146–8). On the history of the dithyramb see esp. van der Weiden (1991: 2–28), Zimmermann (1992), and now Kowalzig and Wilson (2013).

³⁴ See Meyer (1933: 32–5), Gostoli (1991: 97–105), Kivilo (2010: 148–56). On *νόμοι* in general see Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1903: 89–105), Hordern (2002: 25–33), Power (2010: 215–34).

Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην ἐρυσίπολιν ἄρχομ' αἰείδων

Of Pallas Athena, saviour of cities, first I sing.

(Hom. h. 11.1)

Ζῆνα θεῶν τὸν ἄριστον αἰέσομαι ἡδὲ μέγιστον

Of Zeus, the best and greatest of the gods, I will sing.

(Hom. h. 23.1)

Ὠναξ Ἀπολλων, παῖ μεγάλη Δίος

O lord Apollo, child of great Zeus.

(Alc. fr. 307a)³⁵

Sumerian hymns tend in the opposite direction, as they frequently begin with a place-holding noun (such as 'en', 'lord'; 'innin', 'lady'; 'ur-saĝ', 'hero') and insert the name of the god at the head of the second verse ('True lord who decides the fates, born of Ninlil / Suen, beloved son of Ninlil'). The most extreme examples repeat two identical verses or stanzas ('My lady, benevolent one, child of holy An (. . .) / Bau, benevolent one, child of holy An'). This interest in symmetry and retardation is a very old feature of elegant Sumerian poetic style; it was imitated in the OB Akkadian hymns and in Hittite versions of Babylonian works but not, it seems, in Greek.

The name is typically accompanied by references to the god's divine parents (genealogical topos) and/or his regular haunts (geographical topos), e.g.:

Ἀμφὶ Διώνυσον Σεμέλης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν

μνήσομαι

Dionysus, son of glorious Semele, I will recall.

(Hom. h. 7.1–2)

Βροδοπάχες ἄγναι Χάριτες, δεῦτε Δίος κόρα

Rosy-armed chaste Graces, come hither, daughters of Zeus!

(Sapph. fr. 53)

³⁵ See further the openings of Hom. h. 2–5, 7, 9–18, 20–2, 24–33, also Hes. Th. 1, Terp. fr. 3, Sapph. fr. 53, 127, 128, Alc. fr. 45, 325, 343, Pind. Pae. 2, 7b, Aesch. A. 160, Soph. Ant. 781, Ph. 391, F–B 1.1 (to Zeus Kouros), F–B 6.5 (to Pan); further Pavese (1991: 161–2) and West (2007: 305–6), who notes similar patterns in Indo-Iranian hymns. There are admittedly counter-examples where the name is delayed: Alc. fr. 34, 308, Anacr. 12, Pind. O. 14, Soph. Ant. 1115–21.

Χαῖρε Κυλλάνας ὃ μέδεις, σὲ γάρ μοι
θῦμος ὕμνην

Greetings, ruler of Cyllene, for it is you (Hermes) that I am minded to sing!

(Alc. fr. 308)

Φιλόφρον Ἑσυχία, Δίκας
ὦ μεγιστόπολι θύγατερ

Kind Hesychia, O daughter of Justice who makes a city greatest!

(Pind. P. 8.1–2)

Αἰδοίην χρυσοστέφανον καλὴν Ἀφροδίτην
ἄσομαι, ἣ πάσης Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν

I will sing of revered and fair Aphrodite of the golden crown
who has been allotted the walls of all Cyprus.

(Hom. h. 6.1–2)³⁶

OB Sumerian and Akkadian hymns regularly include a genealogical reference expressed in a substantive ('Son of Enlil') or participial ('Born of Ninlil') construction. The haunts and cults of the god are not usually mentioned in the invocation. These are *topoi* that one might expect to find in any polytheistic culture where particular gods, related to each other by marriage and birth, perform particular functions and patronize particular cities or regions. Compare the following opening of an oral-traditional Hawaiian prayer to the goddess Laka: 'In the forests, on the ridges / Of the mountains stands Laka; / Dwelling in the source of the mists. / Laka, mistress of the hula, / Has climbed the wooded haunts of the gods, / Altars hallowed by the sacrificial swine, / The head of the boar, the black boar of Kane (a relative, and one of the major gods). / A partner he with Laka' (Emerson 1909: 18).

The last *Hom. h.* example illustrates a stylistic feature known since Norden (1913: 166–76) as the *Relativstil* of hymnic predication. Once the god has been invoked, the singer frequently carries on with a relative clause (particularly when the geographical *topos* is concerned). Participles, which also occur frequently just after the invocation proper, are an equivalent option (*Partizipialstil*), e.g. *Hom. h. 4*: Ἑρμῆν ὕμνει, Μοῦσα, Διὸς καὶ Μαριάδος υἱόν, / Κυλλήνης μεδέοντα ('Sing of Hermes, Muse, the son of Zeus and Maia, ruling over Cyllene', compare Alc. fr. 308).

³⁶ See Furlay and Bremer (2001: I 54–5) for more examples.

A comparison between the opening of the *Homeric Hymn* to Demeter and a similar passage in the *Theogony* of Hesiod illuminates the nature of the *Relativstil*:

αὐτὰρ ὁ Δήμητρος πολυφόρβης ἐς λέχος ἦλθεν·
ἣ τέκε Περσεφόνην λευκώλενον, ἣν Αἰδωνεύς
ἤρπασεν ἥς παρὰ μητρός, ἔδωκε δὲ μητίετα Ζεὺς

Moreover he (Zeus) joined the bed of bountiful Demeter:
she bore Persephone of the white arms, whom Hades
snatched from her mother, but wise Zeus granted it.

(Hes. *Th.* 912–15)

Δήμητρ' ἠύκομον σεμνήν θεὸν ἄρχομ' αἰίδειν,
αὐτὴν ἠδὲ θύγατρα τανίσφυρον, ἣν Αἰδωνεύς
ἤρπαξεν, δῶκεν δὲ βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς

Of fair-haired Demeter, the venerable goddess, first I sing,
of her and her daughter of the slender ankles, whom Hades
snatched, but loud-thundering, far-sounding Zeus granted it.

(Hom. *h.* 2.1–3)

The passage from Hesiod is one element among many others in the catalogue of the wives of Zeus (*Th.* 901–29), and the relative clause ‘whom Hades snatched’ is a vignette that evokes a well-known myth on which the poet does not choose to expand. The opening of the *Homeric Hymn* is remarkably similar in structure. In particular, both passages show the same chiasitic arrangement (‘whom Hades snatched, but Zeus granted it’) to which Richardson (1974: 138) has drawn attention. But in the *Hymn* the relative clause introducing Hades conveys more than just a passing image of Persephone, for it introduces the past-tense narrative that will take up most of the poem.³⁷ So a brief vignette, taking the form of a relative clause, can evoke a well-known myth; and a mythological hymnic narrative can emerge conversely from the same kind of brief, self-contained relative clause that describes the subject of the song.

A striking analogy to the Greek *Relativstil* occurs in the bilingual Akkadian–Hittite *Incantation to Ištar* (CTH 312), where Hittite relative clauses introduced by declensional form of *kuiš*, ‘who’, translate the adjectival and participial Akkadian attributes: (Akk.) ‘Gathering all the

³⁷ I have not seen the Göttingen dissertation of Stiewe (1954), who seems to have made similar observations: see the remarks of Lenz (1975: 61–2).

divine powers, assuming lordship' // (Hitt.:) 'Who has taken all the [...] and assumed greatness', compare e.g. 'Aphrodite of the golden crown / who has been allotted the walls of all Cyprus (ἡ . . . λέλογχεν)?' According to Schmitt (1967: 198–9), and similarly West (2007: 308–9), the Greek *Relativstil* is inherited from Indo-European ancestry, but in Hittite at least there is little trace of it: other Hittite hymns hardly use this construction at all.

The Greek *invocatio* often announces that the singer is about to get started ('Let me sing'), or the singer may exhort the chorus to begin the song, and he may also request divine inspiration from the Muse(s). Some scholars have raised the possibility of Akkadian (actually Sumerian) influence on certain types of Greek openings, and since the opening is perhaps the most conventional and therefore the most easily comparable section of the hymn, this topic is reserved for detailed examination in Chapter 5.

The name of the deity is usually either a vocative or the object of the verbal predicate 'Let me sing'. But a Greek deity can have many names and may thus be invoked as being πολυνώνυμος (e.g. Bacch. *Epigr.* 1.1, Soph. *Ant.* 1115, Ar. *Th.* 320, compare Soph. fr. 941.1–2 Radt). There can also be hesitation as to the appropriate choice of name by which the deity would like to be addressed, as in this well-known hymn to Zeus:

Ζεύς, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν, εἰ τόδ' αὖ-

τῷ φίλον κεκλημένῳ,

τοῦτό νιν προσενέπω

Zeus—whoever he may be, if it pleases him to be so called,
then I address him by that name.

(Aesch. A. 160–2, transl. Sommerstein)³⁸

Such explicit play on the πολυνωνμία of the gods does not seem to occur in the openings of Sumerian, Akkadian, or Hittite hymns surveyed in Chapters 1–3. A passage in the Greek hymn to solar Apollo from Susa *MDP* 20.92, which Merkelbach and Stauber (2005: 74) now place in the 3rd–2nd century BC, reads τοίγαρ ἔθν[εα] καὶ πόλεις πολυ[ν]ώνυμο[ν] ὅμ[α] / ὠσίωσαν, ἐπεὶ σέβας μ[οῦνο]ς ἔσκε[ς] ἀπάντων (27–8), '... Darum haben

³⁸ See further Eur. *HF* 352–6, fr. 912.2–3 Kannicht, *Ba.* 275–6 and Norden (1913: 144–7), Pulleyn (1997: 96–115), Versnel (2011: 49–87). Plato seems to allude to this topos at *Cra.* 400e (ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς εὐχαῖς νόμος ἐστὶν ἡμῖν εὐχέσθαι, οὔτινές τε καὶ ὁπόθεν χαίρουσαν ὀνομαζόμενοι), *Phlb.* 12c (Καὶ νῦν τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην, ὅπῃ ἐκείνη φίλον, ταύτῃ προσαγορεύω) and (in ironic manner) *Euthd.* 288a–b.

die Völker und Städte dein vielnamiges Auge geheiligt, denn du bist für alle der einzige Gegenstand der Verehrung' (transl. Merkelbach–Stauber). Does πολυώνυμος allude to the 'many names' of the sun among different peoples? Note the presence of a manuscript of the OB Sumerian hymn to Utu (*Utu the hero*) in Susa (MDP 27.287). But given the emphasis on the peoples and cities, πολυώνυμος could also be translated as 'widely known', in the sense of 'having many cults', as at *Hom. h.* 3.82 (of Apollo, whose places of worship are subsequently listed: 141–8, 179–85). While the hymn from Susa shows clear signs of Mesopotamian influence (the goddess Nanaya is mentioned), it is not easy to establish the background of the quoted passage. The general idea seems similar to Soph. fr. 738.2 Radt (*πᾶς προσκυνεῖ δὲ τὸν στρέφοντα κύκλον ἡλίου*), but the central image of the sun as eye is both Greek (e.g. Pind. *Pae.* 9.1–2, Ar. *Nu.* 285) and Mesopotamian (OB personal name ^dutu-igi-ma-tim, 'Šamaš, the eye of the land', CT 4.49b 30).

After announcing his subject, the singer amplifies his praises of the god in the central section of the hymn (*laudes*). Norden (1913: 220–3) introduced the term *dynamische Prädikationsart* to describe the true Greek (*reinhellenisch*) hymnic style—the god is praised for what he does or for what he can do—while in the Oriental (*orientalisch*) style the god is usually praised for what he is (*essentielle Prädikationsart*). This misleading distinction, based mainly on Hebrew but also on some Sumerian and Akkadian sources, is still cited by recent scholarship on Greek hymns.³⁹

While the *essentielle Prädikationsart* is indeed common in Sumerian and Akkadian hymns, it is hardly dominant (at least in the OB period). Chapters 1 and 2 should make it clear that dynamic predication, usually in simple main clauses, is equally common, the following examples being in no way unusual: 'Nergal avenges Enlil, he cools his father's heart' (*Šu-ilišu* A, Sum.), '(Ningišzida) feeds Anu in the heavens / Enlil in Nippur, Šamaš in Sippar / In the E-ugalgal he feeds Adad / in the Eanna Ištar he feeds' (*Hymn to Ningišzida*, Akk.). The evidence does not support the psychological interpretations Norden suggests: 'Dort (i.e. im Orient) das Sein, hier (i.e. im Okzident) die Erscheinung; dort Theorie, hier Deskription; dort die göttliche Welt als Vorstellung, hier als Wille und Tat.'

Note that Greek predications of the type 'whoever (the god) may be' were admitted as an exception to the rule by Norden (1913: 183 n. 1), e.g. *Ζεύς, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν*, Aesch. *A.* 160, similarly *Od.* 4.376 and 5.445, Eur. *Tr.* 885, compare *Il.* 15.247, Eur. *HF* 1263 and fr. 480 Kannicht,

³⁹ Lenz (1980: 85 n. 4), Furley and Bremer (2001: I 56), earlier e.g. Meyer (1933: 4).

later e.g. *sequimur te, sancte deorum, / quisquis es* (Verg. A. 4.576–7). In fact there are also other counter-examples to show that the *essentielle Prädikationsart* was present in the *reinhellenisch* style. Consider δεύτερον αὐτε Ζῆνα (sc. Μοῦσαι κλείουσιν αἰοιδῆ) θεῶν πατέρ' ἡδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν / {ἀρχόμεναί θ' ὑμνεῦσι θεαὶ † λήγουσαί τ' αἰοιδῆς} / ὅσον φέρτατός ἐστι θεῶν κάρτει τε μέγιστος, 'Second they (the Muses, sing) of Zeus, the father of gods and men, / {spurious verse} / how much he is the strongest of the gods and the greatest by his might' (Hes. Th. 47–9); compare γνῶσέτ' ἔπειθ', ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἀπάντων (Zeus referring to a potential challenger, Il. 8.17). Another counter-example seems now to have emerged in a hymnic address to Aegina: ὀνομακλύτα γάρ ἐσσι (γάρ ἐστι sch. Il. 22.51) Δωριεὶ μ[ε]δέοισα [πό]ντῳ / νᾶσος, [ὦ] Διὸς Ἑλλανίου φαεινὸν ἄστρον, 'For, island ruling the Dorian sea, you are famous in name, bright star of Zeus Hellanios' (Pind. Pae. 6.123–5, text and transl. Rutherford 1997: 1–2, 13). Commenting on a phrase in the hymn to Pan from Epidauros (F–B 6.5), χθὼν δὲ πᾶσα καὶ θάλασσα / κίρναται τεὰν χάριν· σὺ γὰρ πέλεις ἔρ<ε>ισμα πάντων, '... for you are the support of everything' (pun on πᾶς/Πάν), Maas (1933: 134 ad 17–18) had already remarked with reference to Norden: 'Unhellenisches kann ich im Panhymnus nicht finden. Es wird doch wohl auch in klassischer und frühhellenistischer Zeit Hymnen gegeben haben, die nicht nur die Tätigkeit sondern auch das Wesen des Gottes schildern. Da kann ein schließendes σὺ γὰρ πέλεις kaum gefehlt haben.'

In some hymns the *laudes* are purely descriptive: *Hom. h.* 27, for instance, relates the habits of Artemis in a series of present-tense main clauses.⁴⁰ Past events may be alluded to without being explicated. When *Hom. h.* 10 begins: *Κυπρὸγενῇ Κυθέρειαν αἰέσομαι*, 'Of Cyprus-born Kythereia I will sing', the name and epithet of Aphrodite recall her aetiological birth-episodes that are fully narrated elsewhere (Hes. Th. 188–206, *Hom. h.* 6). But very often the *laudes* include a past-tense narrative on some formative episode of the god's biography: his birth, his acquisition of his powers, his founding of a temple and cult, or an epiphany. Such a narrative may be introduced in various ways. In the opening of the *Homeric Hymn* to Demeter that has been cited above in the present section, the singer announces his intention to sing of Demeter and her daughter Persephone, and

⁴⁰ Other purely descriptive *laudes*: *Hom. h.* 30 and 31, F–B 2.3 (to Hestia), F–B 6.5 (hymn to Pan). Janko (1981a: 11) distinguishes between 'attributive' and 'mythic' hymns, which corresponds to my 'descriptive' and 'past-tense narrative'.

continues with a relative clause: $\eta\upsilon\ \text{Αἰδωνεύς} / \eta\rho\pi\alpha\acute{\xi}\epsilon\nu$, ‘Whom Hades stole’. That could pass as a self-contained allusion to the myth of the rape of Persephone, as in the corresponding Hesiodic passage ($\eta\upsilon\ \text{Αἰδωνεύς} / \eta\rho\pi\alpha\sigma\epsilon\nu$, *Th.* 913–14). But in the hymn the relative clause introduces the narrative: $\delta\acute{\omega}\kappa\epsilon\nu\ \delta\epsilon\ \dots\ \text{Ζεύς}$, ‘...but Zeus granted it’, and the story begins there.⁴¹ An incipient past-tense narrative may be subordinated with $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, ‘(Let me sing) how...’ (*Hom. h.* 7.2, compare *Od.* 8.76 and 500, *Hom. h.* 4.428; later F–B 6.2, to the Mother of the Gods, 5; F–B 2.6.1, to Apollo, 19; inverted: $\acute{\omega}\delta\epsilon\ \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho\ \dots\ \lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota\ \dots$, ‘For thus... (Zeus) is said to have...’, F–B 6.4, to Apollo and Asclepius, 38–41). Temporal adverbs like $\pi\omicron\tau\epsilon$, ‘Once...’ (*Hes. Th.* 22, compare *Od.* 8.494; later Pind. *Pae.* 6.134–5, Eur. *IT* 1235, *Ba.* 88 and 521; F–B 2.5, to Dionysus, 6) or $\pi\rho\acute{\omega}\tau\omicron\nu$, ‘First...’ (Eur. *HF* 359, compare *Il.* 1.6; $\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \pi\rho\acute{\omega}\tau\omicron\nu$: *Hom. h.* 3.325, 214, compare *Od.* 23.310) can also signal the excursus into the past.

The Greek tendency to amplify the praises of the god by means of a past-tense narrative has been contrasted to the predominantly descriptive character of Near Eastern hymns (Rutherford 2001*b*: 74–5, West 2007: 312). There are indeed only very few hymns with extended past-tense narrative sections in the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite corpora. The best example is probably *Agušaya* A–B, where a story emerges from the *elatio* of Ištar (see the discussion in Chapter 2). It should also be noted that one of the very early sources, an early Akkadian hymn to Šamaš of the mid-3rd millennium, does not conform to the stereotype: ‘Soweit erkennbar, ist der Text über weite Strecken hin narrativ, doch dürfte es sich, wie Einleitung und Schluß nahelegen, um eine Hymne handeln’ (Krebernik 1998: 320). Nevertheless the distinction is broadly correct: while the hymns of the Near Eastern corpora praise the gods both for what they are and for what they do, the style is generally descriptive and past-tense narratives are rare. Compare the remark of Assmann (1991: 828) on Egyptian hymns: ‘So *erzählen* auch die Götterhymnen nicht den Mythos des Gottes, sondern kennzeichnen durch eine Anhäufung lobender Beiworte seine überragende Stellung in der Götterwelt.’

As for allusions to myths in descriptive sections of hymns, some Sumerian and Akkadian examples have been given by Zgoll (2003: 279),

⁴¹ Other (birth-)narratives emanating from an initial relative clause ($\delta\varsigma/\eta\ \dots\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}$): *Hom. h.* 4.3–6, 6.2–5, 18.3–5, 26.3–5, 28.4–6, later e.g. F–B 6.1.1 (to Apollo and Asclepius): 4–10; F–B 2.6.2 (to Apollo): 5–7. Descriptive praises are introduced in the same way at *Hom. h.* 19.6–8.

Edzard (1994: 26), and Hecker (1974: 74–5). One might add the case of CTH 313, a Hittite hymn to the Babylonian Storm-god that alludes to a myth on the Storm-god and the enemies of Enlil (Schwemer 2001: 166–7). It seems natural that hymns should use suggestive epithets or brief asides to call to mind certain famous deeds of the god without narrating them in full: a classic typological parallel.

The *laudes* of some of the *Homeric Hymns* are particularly concerned with explaining the privileges (τιμή, γέρας) or the lot (μοῖρα) of their particular god in relation to the others. This may be compared to Hesiod's depiction of Zeus as the supreme authority apportioning the τιμαί (Th. 74, 885), and in fact the narrative of the *Theogony* itself is sometimes interrupted by short hymnic interludes relating the τιμαί of certain individual deities (e.g. Aphrodite in 188–206, Hecate in 411–52).⁴² Compare this extract from a short hymn to Poseidon, wedged between the *invocatio* and the *preces*, to an extract from one of the interludes in the *Theogony*:

διχθά τοι, Ἐννοσίγαιε, θεοὶ τιμὴν ἐδάσαντο,
ἵππων τε δμητῆρ' ἔμεναι σωτήρά τε νηῶν

Earth-shaker, the gods assigned to you a twofold privilege:
to be the tamer of horses and the saviour of ships.

(Hom. h. 22.4–5)

ταύτην δ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς τιμὴν ἔχει ἥδ' ἐλέλογχε
μοῖραν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
παρθενίους τ' ὀάρους μειδήματά τ' ἐξαπάτας τε
τέρψιν τε γλυκερὴν φίλοτητά τε μελιχίην τε.

... For this is the privilege that (Aphrodite) holds of old, her allotted share
among men and immortal gods:

innocent palaver, smiles, and deceits,
pleasant joys, love, and kindness.

(Hes. Th. 203–6)

Divine τιμή and related terms emerge repeatedly both in the smaller *Homeric Hymns* as well in some of the larger pieces, and in the *laudes* of Greek hymns more generally.⁴³ Discussing the longer

⁴² See Pfister (1929: 5–9) and Ch. 7 on these interludes and their similarity to the *Hom. h.*

⁴³ Esp. *Hom. h.* 2.328, 443–4 (Demeter first refuses to be placated by the offer of τιμαί but accepts once Persephone is returned), 3.131–2 with 4.471–2 (Apollo claiming the τιμαί of prophecy), see further 6.2–3, 19.6, 29.3–4, Pind. fr. 29.5, O. 14.1–2, Eur. *IT* 1280. Many more attestations in Keyßner (1932: 56–67).

narratives in the *Homeric Hymns*, Lenz (1975: 75–8) has suggested that the intervention of Zeus in the organization of the Olympic pantheon seems to have been imposed secondarily on the aetiological myth. This seems particularly evident in the long hymn to Demeter, as Lenz (1975: 58–69) argues: Zeus is initially said to have granted the rape of Persephone (*Hom. h.* 2.3), and later intervenes to offer Demeter her due τιμαί among the gods and, upon her initial refusal, to obtain the return of Persephone (313–58). But Zeus has no role in the foundation of the cult of Demeter in Eleusis (270–4, 292–304, 473–82), although the hymn as a whole is likely to have been composed in the context of that cult.⁴⁴ Nor does Zeus have any part to play in the solution of the rape that lies at the heart of the hymn's aetiology of the seasons, namely the periodic descent and return of Persephone. That compromise is established by Hades and realized by Demeter (371–4, 398–403), and it only remains for Zeus to settle the agreement between the antagonists with a Homeric nod (445–7). While Zeus acts as a moderating paternal figure to whom the other members of the pantheon defer, he is not central to the aetiology of the seasons or to the cult of Demeter in Eleusis. According to Lenz, this is to be explained by the fact that the narrative sections of the longer *Homeric Hymns* generally seek to harmonize the Olympian perspective of the Homeric poems with local myths (such as myths on the foundation of the cults at Eleusis), in which Zeus may not have been so prominent.⁴⁵

Like the opposition between 'cult' versus 'epic' hymns that was discussed at the beginning of the present chapter, the distinction that Lenz seeks to draw between older, Zeus-less *Kultlegenden* and the 'epic' outlook of a hymn like *Hom. h.* 2 proves difficult to maintain in practice, however plausible it may seem in theory. For one must admit that non-'epic' hymns also take Olympian perspectives on the position of the deity in the pantheon. Consider, for instance, F–B 6.2, the hymn to the Mother of the Gods from Epidauros: this composition has more to say on Zeus and the organization of the pantheon than the short epic hymn to the Mother of the Gods in the Homeric

⁴⁴ See most recently Richardson (2011: 50–3).

⁴⁵ 'Ihr Stoff [sc. of the *Hom. h.*] stammt aus allermeist lokalgebundenen Götterlegenden, ihre Formung ist epischer Sangesübung, die auch im sogleich anschließenden Agon zum Zug kommt, verpflichtet' (Lenz 1975: 77). Similar arguments in Faulkner (2011: 20–2); compare Chappell (2011: 66).

collection (*Hom. h.* 14). In the central narrative section of F-B 6.2, Zeus seeks to persuade the Mother to desist from wandering across the mountains, telling her to go away to the gods instead (*ἄπιθ' εἰς θεούς*, 15). She refuses to do so until she receives her proper part in the universe (*ἄν μὴ τὰ μέρη λάβω*, 20). This is no doubt the pattern of initial rejection, just as Demeter initially rejects the *τιμαί* offered by Zeus in the *Homeric Hymn* (2.325–33). As Maas (1933: 139) observes, the poet's concluding salutation to the *μεγάλα [ἄν]ασσα Μᾶτερ Ὀλύμπω* (25–6) clearly implies that the Mother is ultimately granted her wishes, presumably by Zeus.⁴⁶ In this hymn it would be difficult to maintain a distinction between (Homeric) 'epic' and (local) 'cultic' perspectives on what simply seems to be an elementary hymnic topos: the deity's privileges in the Greek pantheon. Even F-B 6.5, the hymn to Pan, does not fail to include an Olympian perspective: it claims that Pan's music rises up to Olympus, reaching the crowd of the immortals (12–15). Maas (1933: 133) rightly compares a passage from the *Homeric Hymn* to Pan (*Hom. h.* 19.21–7), where his celebration of the gods and Olympus is described; indeed, he sees the former passage as a 'lyric rendering' of the latter. These examples confirm the impression that, on the basis of the extant evidence, it is preferable to emphasize (in the manner of Norden and Keyßner) the similarities between different types of Greek hymns rather than to introduce (like Meyer, Lenz) distinctions on the basis of hypothetical *ur*-forms, in this case: local, non-epic, non-Olympian *Kultlegenden* versus hymns composed in the Homeric style.

One of the hymnic topoi that can safely be said to have originated in Sumerian and to have been imitated in Akkadian and Hittite is the *elatio*: a short passage relating that the subject of the hymn has received his attributes from one of the chief gods. West (1997: 266) has already remarked on the similarity between the *elatio* and the emphasis in Greek hymns on *τιμή*, especially where these privileges are said to be granted by Zeus. Perhaps this parallel is to be explained by the hierarchical structure that is common both to the early Greek and to the Old Babylonian panthea. Compare again the Hawaiian prayer to the goddess Laka, which associates the goddess to Kane, one of the major

⁴⁶ Thus also Furley (2012: 247). Maas (1933: 140) compares the demands of the Mother in F-B 6.2 to the share granted by Zeus to Hecate in Hes. *Th.* 411–52. Maas explains the similarity by postulating a common epic(!) hymn as a model for both. The overview of Keyßner (1932: 56–62) illustrates that Zeus is very often identified as the giver of divine privileges in Greek hymns of all types and periods.

gods, and continues: 'Woman, she by strife gained rank in heaven' (Emerson 1909: 18).

In formal terms, the concluding prayer (*preces*) is the simplest element of the hymn. It is probably also the most important section as far as the worshipper is concerned. After praising the deity, he now formulates his request. Praising and praying are conceived as reciprocal:

πρόφρονες ἀντ' ὥδεης βίοτον θυμήρε' ὀπάζειν⁴⁷ (≈ 30.18, 31.17).
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σείο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς

Be favourable (Demeter and Persephone), and grant a comfortable livelihood in return for my song.

And I shall be mindful both of you and of other singing.

(*Hom. h.* 2.494–5)

Such requests for material happiness and prosperity feature in many *preces*:

χαῖρε, θεά, δὸς δ' ἄμμι τύχην εὐδαιμονίην τε

I salute you, goddess (Athena): grant us good fortune and happiness!

(*Hom. h.* 11.5)

ἀλλ' ἴληθ', Ἥφαιστε· (*Hom. h.* 15.9 =) δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τε καὶ ὄλβον

So be favourable, Hephaestus: grant me well-being and prosperity.

(*Hom. h.* 20.8)

Τε Παιάν, ἴθι σωτήρ,
εὐφρων τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ'
εὐαίωνι σὺν ὄλβῳ

Ie Paian, come, saviour,

keep this city by your good will

in happy prosperity!

(refrain of F–B 2.5, to Dionysus)

ὄλβος may indeed be said to be a central term in the Greek hymnic corpus,⁴⁸ and the requests formulated in hymnic *preces* tend to be of a similarly general nature (grant us health, success, a good life, etc.). This distinguishes hymns from independent prayers: for while both may initially flatter the god with similar predications, independent

⁴⁷ ὀπάζειν West, Càssola after Voss, ὀπαζε M.

⁴⁸ See e.g. δίδου δ' ἀμοιβάς / ἐξ [ό]σίων πολλὴν ἡμᾶς / ὄλβον ἔχ[ον]τ[ας] ἀεὶ λιπαρόθρονον / ἀμφὶ σὺν θυ[μ]έλαν χορεύειν, F–B 2.3 (to Hestia): 14–17; see also the *preces* of F–B 2.4 (to Apollo) and Keyßner (1932: 139–46) with a cornucopia of examples.

prayers naturally tend to formulate a concrete request as demanded by the particular situation. Classic examples include the prayer of the priest Chryses to Apollo and Sappho's prayer to Aphrodite:

κλυθί μοι, Ἀργυρότοξ', ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας
 Κίλλάν τε ζαθέην, Τενέδοιό τε ἱφι ἀνάσσεις,
 Σμινθεῦ· εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα,
 ἧ' εἰ δὴ ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μηρί' ἔκηα
 ταύρων ἢ δ' αἰγῶν, τόδε μοι κρήνην ἑέλδωρ·
 τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν

Hear me, Silverbow, you that stand over Chryse (= geographical topos) and sacred Killa, ruling Tenedos with might, Smintheus! If ever I obligingly decked your temple or burned fat thigh-bones for you of oxen and goats, accomplish this my wish: may the Danaeans pay for my tears by your arrows!

(Il. 1.37–42),

Ποικιλόθρον' ἀθανάτ' Ἀφρόδιτα,
 παῖ Δίος δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαί σε,
 μή μ' ἄσασι μηδ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα,
 πότνια, θύμον,
 ἀλλὰ τυῖδ' ἔλθ', αἶ ποτα κατέρωτα
 τὰς ἑμας αὖδας αἰόισα πῆλοι
 ἔκλυες . . .

Rich-throned immortal Aphrodite, scheming daughter of Zeus, I pray you, (= genealogical topos) with pain and sickness, Queen, crush not my heart, but come, if ever in the past you heard my voice from afar and hearkened . . .

(Sapph. 1.1–7, transl. West)

The topos of supporting one's present claim by reminding the god of good reciprocal relations in the past (εἴ ποτε . . .)—illustrated here by the suppliant's pious deeds (Chryses) or divine help previously accorded (Sappho)—is proper to the language of prayer, as it focuses on the particular situation in which the suppliant seeks the deity's assistance ('if ever anything . . . then now also this'). Thus εἴ ποτε is not characteristic of hymnic *preces*, which are more general in nature.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ A point made by Danielewicz (1976: 119); see also West (1997: 273). E. Prodi has pointed out to me that a passage like Pind. *Pae.* 6.181–3 could nevertheless hint at a 'hymnic' εἴ ποτε.

The Homeric poems imagine what the reciprocal relationship might have looked like from the perspective of the gods: at *Iliad* 22.168–73, the many pious sacrifices offered in the past by Hector lead Zeus to wonder whether he should rescue him from death (see further e.g. *Il.* 24.33–8).

Finally, many hymns conclude with a general salutation ($\chi α ἰ ρ ε$), standing either on its own or alongside a prayer.⁵⁰

An OB Sumerian hymn may end on a general salutation ($'z_3-mi_2'$) or on a prayer on behalf of the king, or sometimes on both. Hymnic *preces* in Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite tend to be similarly general, as in Greek. A particularly well-attested Sumerian topos in this context is the request for prosperity ($'\text{he}_2\text{-}\text{gal}_2'$ and similar terms, compare $\delta \lambda \beta \omicron \varsigma$) for the land; the Akkadian hymns imitate the style of the Sumerian *preces*, but for some reason they attest the general salutation only in the 1st millennium (see Chapters 1 and 2). Prosperity is a concern of Hittite *preces* too (see Wegner 1981: 52), and it seems plausible to regard this similarity as another typological parallel: ancient societies believed that they depended on the favour of the gods to provide for their essential material needs, and the singing of hymns was one way to secure good-will.

As far as the $\epsilon \lambda \pi \omicron \tau \epsilon$ -topos is concerned, West (1997: 273–4) has pointed out that supplicants in Akkadian and Hittite prayers also like to recall past examples of their piety in support of their present claim; add that the supplicant may recall not only his own but also the god's past benefactions and that, as usual, the whole topos goes back to Sumerian models: see Hallo (2010: 328).⁵¹ As far as I can see, the observation that these reminders of good relations belong to the language of independent prayers rather than to hymnic *preces* also holds for the Near Eastern corpora.

In the course of this overview, a number of general similarities have emerged, in particular the broadly tripartite structure (*invocatio*, *laudes*, *preces*) and the emphasis on higher legitimation (relation to

⁵⁰ Only $\chi α ἰ ρ ε$: *Hom. h.* 3.545, 4.579, 5.292, 7.58, 9.7, 14.6, 16.5, 17.5, 18.12, 19.48, 27.21, 28.17, 29.13, 33.18, F–B 6.2 (to the Mother of the Gods): 25. Both $\chi α ἰ ρ ε$ and prayer (always in that order): *Hom. h.* 10.4–5, 11.5, 13.3, 15.9, 22.6–7, 25.6, 26.11–13, 30.17–18, 31.17, F–B 6.1.1 (to Asclepius): 19–26. It seems plausible to interpret $\chi α ἰ ρ ε$ not just as a salutation but more specifically as an invitation to the god to 'rejoice! (in this song)', even though the self-reference is rarely explicit, see Race (1982a: 9) and Wachter (1998: 72). Depew (2000) has argued that $\chi α ἰ ρ ε$ invites the god to rejoice in the hymn as if it were a votive offering.

⁵¹ The comparative discussion by Pulleyn (1997: 18–26) is less than well-informed.

the chief gods, *elatio*). While such similarities are not necessarily evidence of contact (other parallels in traditional Hawaiian religious song have been adduced), they do suggest that we are comparing like with like: the hymns under study were songs composed by worshippers for the purpose of securing divine favour by praising a particular god within a wider pantheon. On the basis of the material presented in Chapters 1–4, the second half of this study will examine particular aspects of form and content in early Greek and Mesopotamian hymnic poetry.

Hymnic Openings

The opening may be said to be the most conventional section of a hymn, for the deity must be invoked in the correct and established way. The present chapter considers Greek and Near Eastern hymnic openings with particular regard to a formal element to which scholars have repeatedly drawn attention: announcements of the type ‘Let me sing’. In his study of Akkadian epic poetry, Hecker (1974: 17 n. 3) remarked on the similarity between the second verse of the *Epic of Anzu*, ‘Let me sing the mighty one, the divine son of Enlil’, and comparable phrases in Greek and Roman hymns and hymnic prologues. Wilcke (1977: 186) took up Hecker’s observation in his survey of epic openings in Akkadian, and Neu (1996: 34) and Haas (2006: 127) extended it to comparable phrases in Hittite and Hurrian. Drawing particularly on Akkadian sources, West (1997: 170–3) has advanced an argument in favour of Near Eastern influence on Greek:

From here [i.e. Assyrian royal epic] a direct line leads to the Greeks, and in due course to *arma virumque cano*. Of course, some sturdy sceptic may prefer to believe that the Greeks and the Semites arrived at this form of incipit independently. What is more natural, it may be asked, than that a bard who is about to sing a poem should announce ‘I will sing of *N*’? But it is not ‘natural’, it is cultural. When Pope writes ‘Of gentle Philips will I ever sing’, or when Walt Whitman writes ‘I sing the body electric’, we recognise at once that these are reflexes of Classical tradition, and that the poets would not have arrived at any such phrasing without the Greek antecedents. When we meet it in Archaic Greek verse, then, why should we be any less ready to acknowledge a borrowing from the Near East?

While several others have remarked on the similarity of what one may call the ‘Let me sing’-topos, there has been no systematic attempt to compare the Greek evidence with the main Near Eastern corpora.¹

‘Let me sing’ can be treated as a type of hymnic opening.² The Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite sources have been presented in previous chapters. On that basis, I would now like to assess the hymns and hymnic prologues of early Greek poetry. In purely formal terms, it is convenient to distinguish between three (interrelated) types of opening: ‘Let me sing of *N*’, ‘Sing of *N*!’, and ‘Come, *N*!’

‘LET ME SING OF *N*’

From the perspective of the poet and his audience, the song is an immediate reality and hence the ‘Let me sing’-topos may be expressed in the present tense of the indicative.³ The hymns and hymnic prologues of early hexameter verse display two fixed forms: verse-initial *N* αἶδω, ‘I sing of *N*’, and verse-final *N* ἄρχομ’ αἶδεῖν, ‘I first sing of *N*’:

Ἥρην αἶδω χρυσόθρονον, ἣν τέκε Πείη

I sing of Hera of the golden throne, whom Rhea bore.

(*Hom. h.* 12.1)

Ἑρμῆν αἶδω Κυλλήνιον Ἀργειφόντην

I sing of Hermes the Cyllenian Argus-slayer.

(*Hom. h.* 18.1)

Ἄρτεμιν αἶδω χρυσηλάκατον κελαδαινῆν

I sing of Artemis with the golden arrows and the din of the hunt.

(*Hom. h.* 27.1)

¹ See more recently Stroumsa (2008: 533), de Cristofaro (2006), Wheeler (2002: 36), and Schuol (2002: 331, 336–7), previously also Dirlmeier (1955: 24), Maróth (1975: 72–6), Stella (1978: 366–88).

² Compare the discussion of ‘Hymnal openings’ by Race (1992: 19–31). The following presentation of the Greek material differs from his in one main respect: I do not accept the distinction between ‘rhapsodic’ and ‘cultic’ hymns, which is ultimately based on a misunderstanding of the work of H. Meyer (see the introduction to Ch. 4).

³ Present in the sense of ‘gegenwärtigen oder gegenwärtig gedachten Verbalinhalten (Zuständen, Vorgängen, Handlungen), wobei der Ausdruck Gegenwart [...] nicht auf einen Punkt beschränkt werden darf, sondern die größere oder kleinere Zeitspanne bezeichnet, die der Sprechende und der Hörende als Gegenwart empfinden’ (Schwyzer 2.270). See also Willi (2003: 23–7).

Μούσας αἶδω καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα κλυτότοξον

I sing of the Muses and Apollo the famous archer.

(test. apud sch. *Il.* 1.1 Erbse)

Ἴλιον αἶδω καὶ Δαρδανίην ἔπωλον

I sing of Ilium and Dardania of the fine colts.

(*Il. parv.* fr. 1.1 West)

Δήμητρ' ἡύκομον σεμνὴν θεὸν ἄρχομ' αἶδειν

Of Demeter of the fine hair, the revered goddess first I sing.

(*Hom. h.* 2.1 = 13.1)

Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην ἐρυσίπτολιν ἄρχομ' αἶδειν

Of Pallas Athena, saviour of cities, first I sing.

(*Hom. h.* 11.1)⁴

Some (fragments of) hymns in other styles begin in a comparable way, e.g.:

Δάματρα μέλπω Κόραν τε Κλυμένοι' ἄλοχον

I sing of Demeter and Core, wife of Clymenus.

(Lasus fr. 1.1, *PMG* 702)

Παλλάδα περσέπολιν κλήζω πολεμαδόκον ἀγνάν

παῖδα Διὸς μεγάλου δαμάσιππον

Pallas the sacker of cities I praise, the warlike, chaste,
horse-taming daughter of great Zeus.

(Lamprocl. fr. 1a, *PMG* 735a)

Πλούτου μητέρ' Ὀλυμπίαν αἶδω

Of the Olympian mother of Wealth (Demeter) I sing.

(*Carm. conv.* 2.1, *PMG* 885)

Ὑμὴν Ὑμῆν.

τὰν Διὸς οὐρανίαν <ἀ>είδομεν,

τὰν ἐρώτων πότνιαν, τὰν παρθένοις

γαμήλιον Ἀφροδίταν.

Hymen, Hymen—

we sing of Zeus' heavenly daughter,

the mistress of passions, patron to maidens

in marriage, Aphrodite.

(Eur. fr. 781.14–17 Kannicht)

⁴ Further attestations of ἄρχομ' αἶδειν: *Hom. h.* 16.1, 22.1 (with ἀμφί), 26.1, 28.1, *PMG* fr. adesph. 938e (with ἀμφί).

Πᾶνα τὸν νυμφαγέτα[ν]
Ναῖδων μέλημ' αἰίδω

Of Pan the leader of the Nymphs,
darling of the Naiads, I sing.

(F-B 6.5, to Pan, 1–2)

The 'Let me sing'-topos may also take a voluntative form, where the singer announces his intention to praise his subject. In Greek, this intention is expressed either in the future tense of the indicative or in the present or aorist tenses of the subjunctive.⁵ In early hexameter, voluntative αἰέσομαι and ἀρχώμεθα correspond to indicative αἰίδω and ἄρχομαι and likewise tend to occupy fixed positions in the verse:

Κυπρογενῇ Κυθήρειαν αἰέσομαι, ἧ τε βροτοῖσιν
μείλιχα δῶρα δίδωσιν

I will sing of Cyprus-born Kythereia, who to mortals
gives sweet gifts.

(Hom. h. 10.1–2)

Ἑρακλέα Διὸς υἱὸν αἰέσομαι, ὃν μέγ' ἄριστον
γείνατ' (...) Ἀλκμήνη

I will sing of Heracles, the son of Zeus whom as the best by far (...) Alcmena bore.

(Hom. h. 15.1–3)

Ζῆνα θεῶν τὸν ἄριστον αἰέσομαι ἡδὲ μέγιστον

I will sing of Zeus, the best and greatest of the gods.

(Hom. h. 23.1)

Γαῖαν παμμήτειραν αἰέσομαι, ἥνθ' ἐμέθλον

Of Gaia the universal mother I will sing, the firmly grounded.

(Hom. h. 30.1)

⁵ It is not always possible to distinguish between a future indicative and a short-vowel subjunctive of the sigmatic aorist: since in our context these two forms, which may be historically related, are all but equivalent, grammatical deliberations in the manner of Richardson (2010: 82) on *μνήσομαι* at Hom. h. 3.1 are of no practical consequence. The voluntative future in Greek corresponds to Hittite present-futures (*išhamihhi*, *wallahhi*) in the same context: see Ch. 3. The extent to which a voluntative future implies a temporal reference to an actual future time is debatable: see recently Race (2004: 86–92). A periphrastic future like English 'I will sing' implies a similar modal-temporal ambiguity, whereas an Old English future was expressed by the present.

Nûn aðth' óplotérown ándrôn árchómetha, Mouσαι

But now let us begin from the younger men, O Muses.

(*Epigoni* fr. 1 West)

Mουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' αἰείδειν

Let us begin our singing from the Heliconian Muses.

(*Hes. Th.* 1)⁶

Twice in the *Homeric Hymns*, the verb 'to remember, to call to mind' replaces the usual verbs of singing or beginning, an important variant that will be discussed more fully in the section on Muse-invocations, below:

Μνήσομαι οὐδὲ λάθωμαι Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκάτοιο

I will call to mind and not forget Apollo the far-shooter.

(*Hom. h.* 3.1)

*Ἀμφὶ Διώνυσον Σεμέλης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν
μνήσομαι*

Dionysus, son of glorious Semele,

I will recall.

(*Hom. h.* 7.1–2)

In all of these instances, the voluntative intention is conveyed by the modal function of the verb. An alternative construction transfers the voluntative element to another term. Thus in the lyric poets:

Χαῖρε Κυλλάνας ὃ μέδεις, σὲ γάρ μοι

θύμος ὕμνην

Greetings, ruler of Cyllene, for it is you (Hermes)
that I am minded to sing!

(*Alc. fr.* 308)

Ἀμφί μοι αὔτις ἄναχθ' ἐκαταβόλον

ἀειδέτω φρήν

Let my heart sing again of the far-shooting lord.

(*Terp. fr.* 2)

⁶ Further: *Mōsa Διὸς θύγατερ λίγ' αἰέσομαι ὠρανίῃ* (*Alcm. fr.* 28). Other instances of the voluntative 'Let me sing'-topos: *Hom. h.* 6.1–2 (*Αἰδοίην . . . / ᾄσομαι*), 25.1 (*Μουσάων ἄρχωμαι*), *Hes. Th.* 36 (*Μουσάων ἀρχώμεθα*), *Pind. Pae.* 2.4 (*[παι]ἄνα [δι]ώξω*), *Eur. Ba.* 71–2 (*ὕμνήσω*), *Ar. Th.* 974 (*μέλψωμεν*), *F–B* 2.3 (to Hestia): 2 (*[ύμ]νήσομεν*); compare also *Sapph. fr.* 160 (*ἀείσω*) and *Alcm. fr.* 29 (*ἀείσομαι*).

Ἄρτεμι, σοί μέ †τι φρήν ἐφίμερον
ὕμνον νεναιτε⁷†

Artemis, to you my heart compels me to sing(?).
(PMG fr. adesp. 955)⁸

Homer provides a possible model for these variant forms of the voluntative: the singer Demodocus is said to possess the divine gift to ‘sing in whatever way his heart may stir him’ (ὅππῃ θυμὸς ἐποτρύνῃσιν αἰεῖδεν, *Od.* 8.45, compare 1.347 and *Pind.* *O.* 3.38), and elsewhere the Muse has implanted the ways of song into the φρένες of another singer, Phemius (θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρέσιν οἶμας/παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν, *Od.* 22.347–8, compare *Aesch.* *A.* 990–3).⁹

Finally, the poet may start from a deliberative question rather than a voluntative statement, a type of hymnic opening for which West (2007: 307) adduces Vedic parallels:

Πῶς τάρ σ’ ὕμνήσω, πάντως εὖνυμον ἕοντα;

How should I sing of you, being rich in praise in every way?
(*Hom. h.* 3.19=207)

Ἰσμηνὸν ἢ χρυσαλάκατον Μελίαν
ἢ Κάδμον ἢ Σπαρτῶν ἱερὸν γένος ἀνδρῶν
ἢ τὰν κυανάμπυκα Θήβαν
ἢ τὸ πάντολμον σθένος Ἡρακλέος
ἢ τὰν Διωνύσου πολυγαθέα τιμὰν
ἢ γάμον λευκωλένου Ἀρμονίας
ὕμνήσομεν;

Is it Ismenos or Melia of the golden distaff
or Cadmus or the holy race of the sown men

⁷ Some infinitive (‘to sing’, ‘to praise’) is usually understood, see Furley and Bremer (2001: II 382 ad loc.).

⁸ Compare *Ibyc.* fr. 151.10–12 Davies ([Nῦ]ν δέ μοι . . . ἐπιθύμιον . . . [ύμ]νῃν), later also *Call. Del.* 1–2 (*Τὴν ἱεράν, ὦ θυμέ, τίνα χρόνον †ηποτ† αἰεῖσεις / Δῆλον*). The mention of the poet’s θυμός or φρήν does not necessarily imply that such a hymn was a mere private concern, being ‘nur zum Zweck der Erbauung gedichtet’ (*RE* s.v. Hymnos 158, similarly e.g. Mineur 1984: 50, Tsomis 2001: 91–2): σέ γάρ μοι θύμος ὕμνην is less concise, but not necessarily more personal in tone than the voluntative αἰέσομαι of the *Hom. h.* See already Meyer (1933: 32–4, 48–9). Analytic variants of the voluntative are found in Homer (*νῦν δ’ ἐθέλω ἔπος ἄλλο μεταλλῆσαι, Od.* 3.243), in hymnic openings e.g. *Eur. HF* 355–6 (ὕμνήσαι . . . θέλω), *Pind. I.* 1.15–16 (ἐθέλω . . . ἐναρμόξαι νῦν ὕμνω). See further Thummer (1968: 128), Hummel (1993: 228–34), Pavese (1997: 361 s.v. *volo canere*).

⁹ See Metcalf (2014).

or Thebe of the dark fillet
 or the all-enduring might of Heracles
 or the delightful privilege of Dionysus
 or the marriage of Harmonia of the white arms
 that we should praise?

(Pind. fr. 29)¹⁰

How do these early Greek forms of the hymnic 'Let me sing'-topos relate to the Near Eastern material? The previous chapters have shown that comparable opening announcements in the first person occur in Sumerian, Akkadian, Hurrian, and Hittite hymns and hymnic prologues to narrative poetry. Given that all Hittite examples are found in texts that ultimately depend on Hurrian or Babylonian models, it seems probable that Hittite has in this respect imitated the Sumero-Akkadian hymnic openings. If that view is correct, then we may assume that in principle the 'Let me sing'-topos does indeed lend itself to cross-cultural borrowing. Differences in grammatical terminology cannot obscure the obvious similarity: Sumerian uses the cohortative, Akkadian both the indicative and the precative, Hurrian the voluntative, and Hittite the present-future in a voluntative sense. Greek has the present indicative on the one hand and the (voluntative) future indicative and the subjunctive present and aorist on the other, as well as the analytic version of the voluntative (with *θυμός*, *φρήν*, *ἐθέλω*) and the deliberative question (the counterpart to the voluntative statement).

Upon closer inspection, however, this similarity turns out to be only partial. In conjunction with the 'Let me sing'-phrase, Greek shows a marked tendency to place the name of the deity at the very beginning of the hymn; the Sumerian and Akkadian hymnic style tends in the opposite direction (see Chapter 4). Ornamental repetition in hymnic openings (of the type: 'Let me sing of the great lady of heaven / let me sing of Inana'), a characteristic feature of the Sumerian poetic style that was much imitated in Akkadian and even occurs in Babylonian-influenced Hittite hymns (see Chapter 3 on *CTH* 313), has no parallels in Greek.

Conversely, the concepts of 'beginning from' or 'remembering' a deity are two established forms of the 'Let me sing'-phrase in Greek;

¹⁰ Further Pind. *O.* 2.1–2, *Ar. Th.* 104. See in general Bundy (1972: 57–77), Race (1982*b*: 20–1), Race (1992: 25).

they never occur in the Near Eastern corpora. While even two corpora that are as closely related as Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian show some variation in the 'Let me sing'-phrase, such variation is limited to introducing synonyms for 'to praise' ('Let me magnify, extol, keep repeating the name of *N*'). Greek 'Let me begin from' or 'Let me remember' are specific concepts that can replace 'Let me sing/praise', but they are not mere synonyms. The topos of 'beginning' surely relates to the fact that hymns could function as openers to other kinds of song, while the topos of 'remembering' points to an underlying concept of 'poetry as recall' that will be discussed in the following section. Finally, the deliberative opening (the interrogative counterpart of the voluntative statement) likewise has no Sumero-Akkadian parallels; its comparanda seem to be located in the Indo-European realm.

Upon fuller consideration of the various kinds of hymnic openings, then, the undeniably similar indicative or voluntative expressions of the type 'I will sing' or 'Let me praise' appear to be rather isolated. One might nevertheless argue that such expressions were taken over into Greek at an early stage and eventually developed into the many and varied forms that now lie before us.¹¹ But given that hymns of the Vedic tradition show exactly parallel phrases, the indicative-voluntative 'Let me sing'-openings hardly invite such speculation.¹² It seems preferable to conceive of the 'Let me sing'-topos as a piece of Indo-European heritage or even as an independent development; the important differences in form and context exclude a 'direct line' to the Near East.

'SING OF *N*!'

Another way to begin a hymn is to call on the fellow worshippers to get going. Openings of this kind are popular in epigraphically recorded hymns and in imitations of such hymns in drama:

¹¹ This seems to be the scenario envisaged by de Cristofaro (2006: 296–9).

¹² According to the schema of Tichy (1994: 80), the first *Bauelement* of Indo-Iranian hymns is an 'Absichtserklärung oder Aufforderung des Inhalts "wir verehren . . .", "ich will verkünden . . .", "preist . . .!" o.ä.', e.g. 'īndrasya nū viriyāṇi prā vocaṃ', 'I will now declare the manly deeds of Indra' (*Rigveda* 1.32.1).

[Παιᾶνα κλυτό]μητιν αἰείσατε
 κοῦροι [Λατοῖδαν ἔκ]ατον,
 ἱὲ Παϊάν,
 ὃς μέγα χάρ[μα βροτοῖσιν ἐγείνατο
 Sing, young men, of the crafty Paian,
 the far-shooting son of Leto,
 ie Paian,
 who engendered a great boon to mortals!
 (F-B 6.1.1, to Apollo and Asclepius, 1–4)

Ἴὲ Παῖᾶνα θεὸν αἰείσατε λαοί
 ζαθέας ἐνναέται τᾶσδ' Ἐπιδαύρου
 Sing of ie Paian the god, people,
 you that dwell in this holy Epidaurus!
 (F-B 6.4, to Apollo and Asclepius, 37–8)

Ἐπεσθ' ἄδοντες ἔπεσθε
 τὰν Διὸς οὐρανίαν
 Ἄρτεμιν, ᾗ μελόμεσθα
 Follow me, follow me (my servants,) singing of the daughter of Zeus,
 heavenly Artemis, in whose care we are!

(Eur. *Hipp.* 58–60)¹³

Such appeals to the other participants can be paralleled in Old Babylonian Akkadian (*Hymn to Ištar A*, *Hymn to Nanaya A*, see Chapter 2) and Vedic hymns ('preist!', Tichy 1994: 80).

Yet the singer may also call on the Muse to sing of or praise the deity, as illustrated in a variety of ways by the *Homeric Hymns*. The two verbs used in the 'Let me sing'-topos of the first person, αἰίδω ('I sing') and ἄρχομαι ('I begin'), may be rephrased as an imperative:

Κάστορα καὶ Πολυδεύκε' αἰείσο, Μοῦσα λίγεια

Sing of Castor and Pollux, O clear-voiced Muse!

(*Hom. h.* 17.1)

Ἥφαιστον κλυτόμητιν αἰείδεο, Μοῦσα λίγεια

Sing of Hephaestus, renowned for his craft, O clear-voiced Muse!

(*Hom. h.* 20.1)

¹³ See further Soph. *Tr.* 210–15 (παῖαν' ἀνάγετ', ὦ παρθένου), Ar. *Th.* 101–3 (κοῦραι ... χορεύσασθε), P.Berol. 21160 fr.1.7 ([Ἵ]μνήσατ', ὦ κοῦρο[ι...]), also Hor. *Od.* 1.21.1–2 (*Dianam tenerae dicite virgines / intonsum, pueri, dicite Cynthium*). See Nisbet and Hubbard (1970: 255 ad loc.).

Ἥλιον ὑμνεῖν αὖτε Διὸς τέκος ἄρχεο, Μοῦσα

Now sing first of Helios, O Muse, daughter of Zeus!

(*Hom. h. 31.1*)¹⁴

Then there are imperative forms of *ἐννέπω*, ‘I tell’, in the present and aorist, and *ὑμνέω*, which in origin was probably more or less synonymous with ‘I sing’ but eventually came to acquire the meaning ‘I praise’ (see Chapter 4):

Μοῦσά μοι ἔννεπε ἔργα πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης

Tell me, O Muse, of the deeds of Aphrodite, rich in gold!

(*Hom. h. 5.1*)

Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν, αἰοιδῆσι κλείουσαι,

δεῦτε, Δί’ ἐννέπετε σφέτερον πατέρ’ ὑμνείουσαι

O Muses of Pieria who celebrate with song,
come hither, tell and sing of your father Zeus!

(*Hes. Op. 1–2*)

Ἀμφὶ Διὸς κούρους ἐλικώπιδες ἔσπετε Μοῦσαι

Tell of the sons of Zeus, O quick-glancing Muses!

(*Hom. h. 33.1*)

Ἑρμῆν ὕμνει, Μοῦσα, Διὸς καὶ Μαϊάδος υἱόν

Sing of Hermes, O Muse, the son of Zeus and Maia.

(*Hom. h. 4.1*)¹⁵

¹⁴ The two transmitted imperatives *αείσεο* and *αείδεο* are isolates and have therefore been questioned by some editors. Homer and Hesiod generally tend not to put *αείδω* into the middle voice (exception: *αείσόμενος*, *Od.* 22.352), but *αείσομαι* (*Hom. h.* 10.1, 15.1, 23.1, 30.1) is a regular future formation to which *αείσεο* naturally corresponds, just like imperative *βήσεο* corresponds to future *βήσομαι* (e.g. *ἀλλ’ ἄγ’ ἐμὼν ὀχέων ἐπιβήσεο*, *Il.* 5.221 = 8.105). On *αείσεο*, *βήσεο*, and similar forms see Leumann (1959: 235–40), Prince (1970). Sicherl (1960: 122) surveyed the varying practices of older editions; recently, Càssola (1975) has retained the readings *αείσεο* and *αείδεο*, while West (2003a) has changed the latter to the former. The strange present-middle *αείδεο* remains isolated. Perhaps it was influenced by *ἄρχεο*, the imperative *pendant* of *ἄρχομαι*, in the same context.

¹⁵ Further *Hom. h.* 19.1 (*ἐννεπε*), 32.1 (*ἔσπετε*), 9.1 (*ὕμνει*), 14.1–2 (*ὕμνει*), compare Pind. *N.* 10.1–2 (*Δαναοῦ πόλιν ἀγλαοθρόνων τε πεντήκοντα κορᾶν, Χάριτες, / Ἄργος Ἥρας δῶμα θεοπρεπὲς ὑμνεῖτε*), *Pae.* 7b.15–17 ([*ἐ*]πεύχο[μαι] . . . *Μναμ[ο]σύ- [ν]q κόραισὶ τ’ εὐμαχανίαν δίδομεν*), *Dith.* 1.14 ([*ἀ*]ἔξετ’ ἔτι, *Μοῖσαι, θάλας αἰοιδᾶν*), *Bacch.* 3.1–3 (*Ἀριστο[κ]άρπου Σικελίας κρέουσιν / Δ[ά]ματρα ἰοστέφανόν τε Κούραν / ὕμνει, γλυκύδωρε Κλεοί*). Other archaic examples include e.g. *Alcm. fr.* 14 (*Μῶσ’ ἄγε . . . ἄρχε παρσένοῖς αείδην*) and *fr.* 27, compare also the parody by *Ar. Av.* 904–6

These imperatives to the Muse, in particular those formed from ἀείδω and ἐννέπω, naturally recall the openings of heroic or mythical narratives.¹⁶ This has caused some genetic speculation. Is the appeal to the Muse proper to narrative poetry, and its occurrence in the *Homeric Hymns* therefore a sign of adaptation to the epic style (Fröhder 1994: 37)?¹⁷ It should be remembered that appeals for divine assistance are perfectly common in hymns outside the epic-hexametric corpus:

[Κέκλυθ' Ἑλι]κῶνα βαθύδενδρον αἰ' λά[χετε Διό]ς
ἐ[ρι]βρόμου θύγατρες ἐνὶ ὠλ[ενοι], μόλετε, συνόμ-
αιμον ἵνα Φοῖβον ᾠδα[ι]σι μέλψητε χρυσεοκόμαν

Listen, you fair-armed daughters of loud-roaring Zeus that were allotted
Helicon of the deep woods, come to celebrate your sibling
golden-haired Phoebus in song!

(F-B 2.6.1, to Apollo, 1–4)

[]ς θεαί
δεῦρ' ἔλθετ' ἀπ' ὠρανῶ
καί μοι συναείσατε
τὰν Ματέρα τῶν θεῶν

[] goddesses,
come hither from heaven
and sing with me of the Mother of the gods!
(F-B 6.2, to the Mother of the gods, 1–4)¹⁸

(*Νεφέλοκοκκυγίαν τὰν εὐδαίμονα κλήσον, ᾧ Μοῦσα, τεαῖς ἐν ὕμνων ἀοιδαῖς*). See in general Otto (1956: 35–9).

¹⁶ Il. 1.1 (*Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά*), *Thebaïs* fr. 1 West (*Ἄργος ἄειδε, θεά*), Hes. *Cat. fr.* 1–2 (*ἀείσατε Μοῦσαι*), *Od.* 1.1 (*Ἀνδρά μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα*), Il. 2.761 (*σύ μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα*), Hes. *Th.* 114 (*ταῦτά μοι ἔσπετε, Μοῦσαι*), etc.; an early parody is by Hippon. fr. 128 West (*Μοῦσά μοι Εὐρυμεδοντιάδεα τὴν ποντοχάρυβδιν . . . ἔννεπε*).

¹⁷ See Meyer (1933: 20 n. 7), Koller (1956: 200–3), Janko (1981a: 11), Faulkner (2008: 70–2), Létoublon (2012: 26–8). Steinrueck (2006) has proposed a functional distinction between *Hom. h.* opening on 'Sing, Muse!' vs. those opening on 'Let me sing'.

¹⁸ Also F-B 2.6.2 (paean to Apollo): 1–3 ([Τ]τ' . . . ὕμνων κα[τάρ]χ[ετε δ' ἐμῶν, Πιερίδες], compare Sapph. fr. 127 (*Δεῦρο δηῦτε Μοῖσαι*), fr. 128 (*Δεῦτέ νυν ἄβραι Χάριτες καλλίκομοί τε Μοῖσαι*), and the parodies by Ar. *Ra.* 875–84 (*ὦ Διὸς ἐννέα παρθένοι ἀγναὶ Μοῦσαι . . . ἔλθετε*), also *Ra.* 1306 and *Pax* 775–80, Tim. fr. 20.5 PMG 796 (*ἀπίτω Μοῦσα παλαιά*), *Batr.* 1–2 (*χορὸν ἐξ Ἑλικῶνος / ἐλθεῖν εἰς ἐμὸν ἦτορ ἐπεύχομαι εἶνεκ' ἀοιδῆς*), *Carm. priap.* 2.4–8 (*Nec Musas tamen, ut solent poetae, / ad non virgineum locum vocavi. / Nam sensus mihi corque defuisset / castas, Pierium chorum, sorores / auso ducere mentulam ad Priapū*). See Kleinknecht (1937: 103–16).

The only difference between the second example and the opening of *Hom. h.* 14.1–2, addressed to the same goddess (*Μητέρα μοι πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων / ὕμναι, Μοῦσα λίγεια*), is the cletic element ('come hither'), a very common feature of Greek hymnic openings, as will be seen in the following section. The cletic Muse-invocation is an established hymnic opening (first attested in Hes. *Op.* 1–2, quoted above) and can best be understood as a combination of two common tropes: the cletic invocation and the appeal to the Muse. So whatever the pre-historic background, three types can be distinguished: hymns with purely cletic openings ('come hither!'), hymns with pure appeals to the Muse ('sing Muse!', as in the *Homeric Hymns*), and hymns with a combination of the first two types ('come hither, Muse, and sing!', as in Hes. *Op.* 1–2 and the examples just cited).

It is often observed that the Muses are unique to Greece, having no parallels in the Near East.¹⁹ The Muses, as the daughters of Memory (Hes. *Th.* 53–4, *Hom. h.* 4.429–30), illustrate the Indo-European theme of 'poetry as recall', defined by West (2007: 33) as 'the use, in relation to poetic activity, of words based on the root **men* "think (of), call to mind"', from which *Μνημοσύνη* and (probably) *Μοῦσα* ultimately derive.²⁰ There are two instances in the *Homeric Hymns*, as we had seen in the preceding section, where *μνήσομαι*, which is formed from the same root, indeed replaces more common expressions for 'Let me sing' (*Hom. h.* 3.1, 7.2). This voluntative expression of 'poetry as recall' needs to be seen in the context of the widespread topos of honouring the god by 'being mindful' of him, frequently in connection with song. Relevant passages in the *Homeric Hymns* are the description of the festival on Delos, where the Ionians gather to 'be mindful' (*μνησάμενοι*, 3.150, also 160) of Apollo in boxing, dancing, and singing, and the common closing formula, 'I will be mindful' (*μνήσομαι*) both of you and of other singing'. Conversely, a suppliant addressing his god may emphasize that he would never forget to worship him: 'O lord, son of Leto, child of Zeus, I shall never forget (*λήσομαι*) you as I begin or end' (Thgn. 1–2). The regular observance of Athena at her festivals is an argument put forward by an Athenian chorus as it implores the goddess to ward off an advancing army:

¹⁹ See e.g. Dirlmeier (1955: 24), de Cristofaro (2006: 297), López-Ruiz (2010: 52), West (2011a: 81 ad A1).

²⁰ See EDG and LfgrE s.v. *Μοῦσα*; also Otto (1956: 23–7), Brillante (2009: 43–6).

‘...for your privilege of rich sacrifice is always observed ($\acute{\alpha}\epsilon\iota$ $\kappa\rho\alpha\lambda\nu\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$), and the waning day of the month, the songs of young men and the dances of the chorus are not forgotten ($\omicron\upsilon\delta\delta\epsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\iota$)’ (Eur. *Heracl.* 777–80). The concept of honouring the god by ‘recalling (and not forgetting) him in song’ seems to be so well established that, at *Hom. h.* 3.1, 7.2, the element of ‘recalling (and not forgetting)’ can stand in for the element of ‘singing’.

This in turn provides a first point of comparison with the Near Eastern corpora. The concept of ‘being mindful’ of a deity is perfectly well established there: the corresponding Akkadian verb is *ḥasāsum*, sometimes also *kullum*. So when Gilgamesh sets out on his expedition against Huwawa, the elders remind him to heed Lugalbanda, his personal god:

[k]a-*ṣu*₂-tim me-e a-na ^dutu ta-na-qi₂

[il-k]a ta-*ḥa*-sa₃-as ^dlugal-banda₃^{da}

‘You must pour cool water (in libation) to Šamaš,
you must remember your [god,] Lugalbanda.’

(OB Gilg. III 270–1, transl. George)

Conversely, Anšar has the following blessing for the newly crowned Marduk in *Enuma eliš*:

li-ad-di-ma ṣal-mat saḡ-du pa-la-ḥi-iš-*ṣu*₂

ba-’u-u₂-la-tum lu ḥi-is-su-sa diḡir-ši-na li-iz-zak-ra

‘Let (Marduk) appoint the black-heads to worship him.

The subject humans should take note and call on their gods!’

(VI 113–14, transl. Lambert)

More specifically, *ḥasāsum* occurs in the context of divine praise, for example, in a fragmentary section of a post-Old Babylonian prayer to Ištar: *ṣuq-qa-a ḥu-us-sa-ši*, ‘Exalt and be mindful of her!’ (*AfO* 19, 54 line 231). Similarly in an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II: ‘Let the expert read all my deeds that I have inscribed on the stela, and let him be mindful (*li-iḥ-ta-as-sa-as*) of the glory of the gods!’ (*VAB* 4, 184 61–4).²¹ But the concept of remembering the deity is not usually

²¹ See further *CAD* s.v. *ḥasāsum* (1) and *kullu* (3e). The polar expression ‘remember and not forget’ is also attested: ‘May they (the gods and goddesses?) not be forgotten, may (the people) remember (*li-kil-la*) their gods’ (*En. el.* VI 117, transl. Lambert); ‘O gods, let these be lapis-lazuli (beads) around my neck, so that I remember (*lu-u₂-uḥ-su-sa-am-ma*) these days and never forget them’ (*SB Gilg.* XI 166–7, transl. George).

associated with the creation of poetry. The poet does not invoke his own or some deity's faculties of 'remembering' or 'calling to mind' the greatness of a god or the exploits of a hero. We have seen that, in certain Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymns, the goddess Inana/Ištar involves herself by commissioning or participating in the song (*Iddin-Dagan A*, *Hymn to Ištar B*). But that is not comparable to the function of the Muses, for Inana/Ištar intervenes only in her own hymns and has no overall responsibility for poetry. The same is true of those passages in 1st-millennium Akkadian poetry where the deity is said to have revealed the text to the scribe.²² So far, the Muses remain unique in their combination as patrons of poetry and gods of memory. Is it possible to go further than this statement?

A number of studies have considered the influence of oral poetry in the Near East, sometimes with reference to Greece, with varied results. None seems to have remarked on the link between memory and poetic activity, and while I do not intend to revisit the question of orality and literature in general, I would like to suggest that it is relevant here.²³ The Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian hymns were evidently composed to be performed. In certain hymns of Išme-Dagan of Isin, the king claims to have 'laid (this song) into the mouth (ka-ka mu-ni-ġar) for ever'. Two important generic designations of hymns derive from the names of musical instruments ('adab', 'tigi'). So the hymns were oral in the sense that they were intended to be sung, and at least the hymns of Išme-Dagan seem to imply some degree of oral transmission ('for ever'), or at least re-performance. In a particularly important passage, King Šulgi of Ur (21st century BC) has more specific instructions for his religious poetry:

²² See West (1997: 286–7). It does seem that the goddess Geštinana is referred to as a protective deity ('lamma') of songs and singers in some Old Babylonian Sumerian poetry: see Goodnick Westenholz (2005: 356, 362–3), whose translation of 'lamma' as 'muse' I nevertheless find questionable on this slender basis.

²³ For the Near East see esp. Alster (1972: 15–27, 123–33), Jacobsen (1982), the contributions to Vanstiphout and Vogelzang (1992), West (1997: 593–606), Schuol (2002), Powell (2002: 80–8), Foster (2005: 45), Archi (2007: 197–201), Archi (2009). Concluding his essay in the Vanstiphout–Vogelzang volume, the Classicist J. Russo (1992: 20) stated that Homer probably 'composed in his head and more or less memorized a largely but not entirely fixed text, and then either dictated it to a scribe, or wrote it down himself, or passed it on to a successor', but his point about memorization was not taken up by any of the contributing specialists of the ancient Near East.

en₃-du-ġu₁₀ a-da-ab ħe₂-em tigi ma-al-ga-tum ħe₂-em
 ser₃-gid₂-da ar₂ nam-lugal-la
 šumun-ša₄ kun-ġar bal-bal-e ħe₂-em
 gi-gid₂ za-am-za-am ħe₂-em
 ġeš-tu⁹ġeštu-ge nu-dib-(be₂) ka-ta nu-šub-(bu-)de₃
 ki-šu-ke₄ lu₂(-u₃) nam-bi₂-ib₂-da₁₃-da₁₃-a
 e₂-kur-za-ġin₃-na muš na(m)-ba-an-tum₂-mu
^den-lil₂-ra eš₃ u₄-sakar-ra-ka-na ħe₂-(en-)na-du₁₂

My songs, be they the ‘adab’, the ‘tigi’, the ‘malgatum’,
 the ‘sergida’, the praise of kingship,
 be they the ‘šumunša’, the ‘kunġar’, the ‘balbale’,
 be they the ‘gigid’, the ‘zamzam’²⁴

—so that they would not slip from memory or be cast from (the
 people’s) mouth

let no one abandon them in the cult places,

let them not cease in the gleaming Ekur,

let them be sung for Enlil at his new-moon festival!

(*Šulgi E*, 53–60 after Klein 1989: 297–8)

So continued cultic use is to guarantee the survival of Šulgi’s compositions. At the end of the same hymn, he explains the method of transmission in the cult places:

en₃-du-ġu₁₀ ka-ka ħe₂-ġal₂
 ser₃-ġu₁₀ ġeš-tu⁹ġeštu-ge na-an-dib-be (. . .)
 u₄-ul-li₂-a-aš nu-ħa-lam-e-de₃
 e₂ ġeš-tu⁹ġeštu ^dnisaba niġ₂-umun₂-a-gal-gal mu-bi-še₃ mul-(an-ku₃-)
 gen₇ bi₂-mu₂
 u₄-me-da na-me ġeš-tu⁹ġeštu-ge niġ₂ la-ba-ab-dib-be₂ x-bi-še₃
 nu-ħa-lam-e mul-an sag₂ nu-di mu da-ri-ġu₁₀-še₃
 nar-e dub-sar ħe₂-(en-)ši-(in-)tum₂(-mu) igi ħe₂-en-ni-[i]n-bar-re
 ġeš-tu⁹ġeštu ġizzal ^dnisaba-ka-kam
 dub-za-ġin₃-gen₇ gu₃ ħe₂-na[?]-ta[?]-de₂-e
 en₃-du-ġu₁₀ ku₃ ki-dar-ra-gen₇ pa ħe₂-em-ta-e₃-e₃
 ki-šu ki-šu-ke₄ ħe₂-em-ma-an-du₁₂
 eš₃ u₄-sakar-ra na-me na-an-da₁₃-da₁₃

Let my songs be in the mouths,

let my songs not slip from memory! (. . .)

So that (these songs) would not be forgotten in the future,

²⁴ See the corresponding sections in Shehata (2009) on these types of song.

I founded the very expert temple of Nisaba-wisdom like the (heavenly) stars,
 and no one shall let (the songs) slip from memory in future,
 [...] not be forgotten; to these unchanging heavenly stars, my eternal verses,
 let the singer bring the scribe, let him make him look at them!
 It is the wisdom and intelligence of Nisaba:
 let him (i.e. the scribe) read out to him (i.e. the singer) as if from a tablet of lapis-lazuli!
 Let my songs gleam like a lode,
 let them be sung in all the cult places,
 let no one neglect them at the festival of the new moon!

(*Šulgi E*, 240–54, after Klein and Sefati 2014: 89–91)

These admittedly difficult lines (a full edition and commentary of the text is still lacking) suggest that scribal intervention was to ensure continued use of the hymns in cult. The scribe's task, it seems, is to attend an institution of learning with the singer and to read out the wording of the songs for him, thus ensuring their correct performance. Another hymn by the same king calls for similar cooperation between singer and scribe,²⁵ and in one of the most ancient Sumerian poems, the *Keš Temple Hymn*, the scribal goddess Nisaba performs what can surely be understood as a prototypical function:

keš₃^{ki} kur-kur-ra saĝ il₂-bi
^den-lil₂-le keš₃^{ki}-a za₃-mi₂ am₃-ma-ab-be₂
^dnisaba nu-ka dili-bi-im
 enim-bi-ta sa-gen₇ im-da-an-sur
 dub-ba sar-sar šu-še₃ al-ĝa₂-ĝa₂

When Keš raised its head to him (Enlil) among all of the mountains,
 Enlil sang a song in praise of Keš,
 And (the goddess) Nisaba—she was the unique scribal expert for this—
 let it drip from these words like (precious stones) onto a string,
 writing them down on a tablet which she placed into her hand.

(*Keš Temple Hymn*, 8–12, text and translation after Wilcke 2006)

It is not surprising that Nisaba, or her scribes, should ensure the transmission of hymnic literature, for the evidence shows that cuneiform writing was adapted to record literary texts, including religious

²⁵ *Šulgi B*, 308–19, see Alster (1992: 45–9), Ludwig (1990: 40–3), Klein and Sefati (2014: 86–9).

poetry, as early as the mid-3rd millennium. This does not mean that such texts were only supposed to be read. Rather, it seems that fixing them in writing guaranteed their survival and continued performance.

Much later Akkadian compositions still attest that a written version was thought to guarantee a stable transmission and continued engagement with the text by future audiences. As at the end of *Enuma eliš*: 'Instruction which a leading figure repeated before him (Marduk): / He wrote it down and stored it so that generations to come might hear it' (VII 157–8, transl. Lambert). The earlier requirement (VII 144–8) that the fifty names of Marduk should henceforth be expounded and repeated is not necessarily evidence for oral transmission, as West (1997: 596) claims. For just as the hymns of Šulgi are to be re-performed in cult on the basis of their written texts, so the written version of *Enuma eliš* would ensure its communication to future audiences—as the quoted passage clearly states. The other text quoted by West is admittedly a real counter-example: the last line of the short Assyrian epic poem *The Hunter*, of uncertain date, states: 'Let the earlier man hear it and re-[peat] it to the later one!', *a-na ar-ki-i lu-ša₂-a[n-ni]*, LKA 62 rev. 9. Another exception may be seen in the conclusion of the OB Sumerian composition *Inana and Shukaletuda*, 296–300, where Inana announces to the gardener Shukaletuda that his name will not be forgotten, since it will live on in song. The goddess mentions a singer in the palace and a shepherd singing as he churns butter, but does not refer to any scribal activity.—See also the end of *Erra* (V 42–61), where both singers and scribes are called on to further the praises of the god, and the famous prologue to SB Gilg. (I 24–8): 'Open the tablet-box of cedar, release its clasps of bronze! [*Open*] the lid of its secret, lift up the tablet of lapis-lazuli and read out all the misfortunes, all that Gilgamesh went through!' (transl. George). See also Goodnick Westenholz (1982: 152–3), Radner (2005: 101–10).

I do not deny that purely oral traditions may have existed alongside written transmission, as several scholars have speculated, although I would resist the temptation to postulate ad hoc 'oral traditions' wherever a gap happens to appear in our textual record.²⁶ This much is clear: where the Sumero-Akkadian sources speak of the future success of songs, and of hymns in particular, they usually make it depend on fixation in writing.

²⁶ Memorization may also have been a practice employed in copying down OB Sumerian literary texts as scribal exercises, according to Delnero (2012).

The situation in early Greece is quite different. Here we find not some scribal goddess but rather the Muses, the daughters of Memory, assisting the poet:

(I could not name the mass of the Greeks even if I had ten mouths and ten tongues . . .)

εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπίαδες Μοῦσαι, Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
θυγατέρες, μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον

. . . unless the Olympian Muses, the daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus,
recalled how many came to Ilium.

(*Il.* 2.491–2)²⁷

εἴπατε δ' ὥς τὰ πρῶτα θεοὶ καὶ γαῖα γέγοντο

Tell, (Muses,) how the gods and the earth first came to be!

(*Hes. Th.* 108)

(The victorious chariot urges me to sing in celebration . . .)

μεγάλων δ' ἀέθλων

Μοῖσα μεμνᾶσθαι φιλεῖ

. . . and the Muse likes to recall great contests.

(*Pind. N.* 1.11–12, compare *Pae.* 14.32–7)

The Muses and Memory also act prospectively:

εἰ δὲ τύχη τις ἔρδων, μελίφρον' αἰτίαν
ῥοαῖσι Μοισᾶν ἐνέβαλε· ται μεγάλοι γὰρ ἀλκαί
σκότον πολλὸν ὕμνων ἔχοντι δεόμεναι·
ἔργοις δὲ καλοῖς ἔσοπτρον ἴσαμεν ἐνὶ σὺν τρόπῳ,
εἰ Μναμοσύνας ἔκατι λιπαράμπυκος
εὔρηται ἄποινα μόχθων κλυταῖς ἐπέων ἀοιδαῖς.

If a man succeeds in an exploit, he casts a honey-minded
theme for song into the Muses' stream, for great deeds of valour
remain in deep darkness when they lack hymns.

We know of a mirror for noble deeds in only one way,

²⁷ Some regard these lines as a later addition (West 2001: 177–8), but their argument, which starts from a supposed misunderstanding of *πληθύν* in 488, is not generally accepted: see most recently Latacz (2003: 144). On the translation see Tichy (2010: 19–21 nn. 46 and 49)—Virgil's parallel *tu vatem, tu, diva, mone* (*Aen.* 7. 41) has a causative from the same root **men*. Compare Horace's parodic *Sat.* 1.5.51–4 (*nunc mihi paucis / Sarmenti scurrae pugnam Messique Cicerri, / Musa, velim memores, et quo patre natus uterque / contulerit litis*).

if, by the grace of Mnemosyne with the shining crown,
one finds a recompense for his labours in poetry's famous songs.
(Pind. N. 7.11–16, transl. after Race)

ἀρετᾶ[ς γε μ]ὲν οὐ μινύθει
βροτῶν ἅμα σ[ώμ]ατι φέγγος, ἀλλὰ
Μοῦσά νιν τρ[έφει]

The glow of mortals' virtue does not fade along with the body,
but the Muse fosters it.

(Bacch. 3.90–2)

(Just as past men have striven for Virtue, so did Hermias give his life for it)

τοιγὰρ αἰοίδιμος ἔργοις,
ἀθάνατόν τέ μιν αὐξήσουσι Μοῦσαι,
Μναμοσύνας θύγατρεις

Therefore he is worthy of song by his deeds,
and the Muses will raise him to immortality,
the daughters of Memory.

(Arist., Hymn to Virtue, PMG 842.17–19)²⁸

These are reflections of an old and established topos: the omniscient Muses are both retrospective and prospective—that is to say, they can both recall the stories of old and guarantee the future survival of the song. Writing, according to this archaic vision, plays no part in the creation and propagation of poetry.²⁹ Whereas the Sumero-Akkadian sources associate the long life even of orally performed poetry with its fixation in writing, perhaps due to the fact that the cuneiform script was adapted to record literary texts at a very early stage, the Greek (and Indo-European) topos of 'poetry as recall' would seem rather to reflect the reality of an illiterate culture, in which poetry was not fixed in this way but transmitted orally.³⁰ As Schadewaldt (1970: I 785) has put it:

²⁸ See further Sapph. fr. 55, Pind. O. 10.91–6, I. 8.56a–63.

²⁹ Unlike in the Hellenistic poets: Call. Aet. I fr. 1.21–2, Batr. 1–5, Posidipp. 118.1–6 Austin–Bastianini, Ov. Fast. 1.93. There is earlier play on writing as the tool of memory and 'mother of the Muses': Aesch. Pr. 460–1 (γραμμᾶτων τε συνθέσεις, / μνήμην ἀπάντων, μουσομήτορ' ἐργάνην, compare Pr. 789, Pind. O. 10.1–3). West (1997: 582) compares a late Sumerian proverb (Sm 61 = BWL 258–9.19): nam-dub-sar-ra ama gu₃-de₂-ke₄-e-ne aia um-me-a-ke₄-eš, perhaps 'Scribal art is the mother of the speakers, the father of the experts'.

³⁰ On memory and oral poetry in archaic Greece see esp. Notopoulos (1938), Moran (1975), Thomas (1995: 113–17), Bakker (2007), Lardinois (2007), and in general Rubin (1995). There is an esoteric discussion of the 'Hymn as *mnēma*' by Depew (2000: 69–77), which I admit I have only partly understood. Hardie (2005)

It seems likely that the Greeks took over and later kept in use the alphabetic script from the Phoenicians as early as in the eleventh or tenth century, and Homer, in the eighth century, certainly wrote the *Iliad*. Nevertheless, the oldest period of Greek literature is marked by the fact that, concerning the performance of texts that are already written, the ancient oral character remains in force. Therefore we must distinguish, in the older period, between an epoch in which literature was written but not generally read (in the sense that it was instead read aloud, recited, sung, and listened to), and a epoch that began later, in which literature was read.³¹

If one accepts the view that the Homeric poems were committed to writing already in the 8th or 7th century BC, then the concept of 'poetry as recall' would be an archaism even at such an early stage. The Muses were in any case the divine transfiguration of Memory as goddesses of poetry, and they remained in existence as a topos even as the use of writing spread and became a normal part of Greek life.³²

To conclude: in Greece, as in Babylonia, the gods wanted to be remembered (and not forgotten), and poets and their patrons wanted to ensure a long life for their songs. If one accepts the conventional

explores the literary and eschatological implications of Memory (and Muse-cults?) in Sappho, on which see also Rösler (1980: 73–5).

³¹ 'Zwar haben die Griechen die später weiterhin bei ihnen in Übung gebliebene Schrift wohl schon im elften oder zehnten Jahrhundert von den Phoinikern übernommen, und Homer, im achten Jahrhundert, hat die *Ilias* gewiß schon geschrieben. Dennoch ist es für die älteste griechische Literatur charakteristisch, daß, was die Darbietung von bereits niedergeschriebenen Schriftwerken angeht, die alte Mündlichkeit noch weiterhin wirksam bleibt. So haben wir für die ältere Zeit eine Epoche der zwar geschriebenen, aber nicht allgemein gelesenen, sondern vorgelesenen, rezitierten, gesungenen und angehörten Literatur von der erst später einsetzenden Epoche einer gelesenen Literatur zu unterscheiden.'

³² Compare the quotation from Aristotle's *Hymn to Virtue*, above, and Pöhlmann (1990: 11): 'Strukturen, die möglicherweise auf die mündlichen Ursprünge einer Gattung zurückverweisen, verfestigen sich leicht zu Gattungsmerkmalen. Dies gilt etwa von der Rolle des von der Muse inspirierten improvisierenden Sängers (...) Wegen ihrer Zähigkeit können solche Strukturen für eine bestimmte Gattung einen "Sitz im Leben" vorspiegeln, der längst überholt ist.' See also Thomas (2007: 151–60) on competition between Pindar's epinician poetry and (inscribed) victory monuments. On writing and literature in early Greece see e.g. Schadewaldt (1970: I 785–96), Herington (1985: 45–57), Andersen (1987), Slings (1989), Pöhlmann (1990), Thomas (1992: 113–27), Lane Fox (2008: 34). For the view that the Homeric poems were recorded in writing at an early stage, see most recently West (2011a: 3–5, 10–11); for a different position see Nagy (1996: esp. 110). The arrival of the alphabet in Greece is now generally attributed to a later period—closer to the 8th century—than the dates given by Schadewaldt.

view of the early period as articulated by Schadewaldt, then one might even compare the historical *reality* of performance and transmission depicted in the Sumerian and Akkadian sources, where hymns were committed to writing by scribes but nevertheless remained oral in the sense that they were meant to be orally re-performed in cult. But the *conceptions* of poetry are clearly different in this respect, for memory is not normally associated with the creation of poetry in the Sumero-Akkadian (or Hittite) sources. I suggest that this conceptual difference could well explain the uniqueness of Greece's Muse when compared to her eastern neighbours.

‘COME, N!’

Finally, instead of announcing his intention to sing or inviting his fellow revellers or the Muse to sing, the hymnode may invoke the deity in the vocative. We have encountered this topos at the opening of Hesiod's *Works and Days* in combination with an appeal to the Muses, and it is indeed common in hymns and prayers of all kinds:

Ἐλθεῖν, ἦρω Διόνυσσε,
 Ἀλείων ἐς ναόν
 ἄγνόν σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν
 ἐς ναόν
 τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ θύων
 ἄξιε ταῦρε,
 ἄξιε ταῦρε
 Come, lord Dionysos,
 to the Eleans' sacred temple
 with the Graces, to the temple,
 charging on your hoof,
 noble bull,
 noble bull!

(*Carm. pop.* 25, PMG 871)

Ἰὼ μέγιστε Κούρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε,
 παγκρατὲς γάνος, βέβακες
 δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος·
 Δίκταν ἐς ἐνιαυτὸν ἔρπε
 καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ

*Io, O greatest Kouros,
greetings, son of Kronos,
almighty apparition! You stand
as the leader of the gods—
come once again to Dicte
and rejoice in the song!
(Refrain of F–B 1.1, hymn to Zeus Kouros)*

Δεῦτέ νυν ἄβραι Χάριτες καλλίκομοί τε Μοῦσαι
Come hither, pretty Graces and Muses of the fine hair!
(Sapph. fr. 128)³³

Such invocations have good Indo-European parallels, according to West (2007: 318–21). They are also copiously attested in Akkadian prayers, which frequently invite the deity to come to the supplicant.³⁴ In one variant of these invocatory appeals, the supplicant spells out the various places in which the deity may be residing, like the Lycian leader Glaukos in the *Iliad*:

*κλυθι, ἀναξ, ὅς που Λυκίης ἐν πίονι δήμῳ
εἷς ἢ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ· δύνασαι δὲ σὺ πάντοσ' ἀκούειν*
'Listen, lord (Apollo), you who may be in Lycia's rich country,
or in Troy, for you can hear everywhere!
(*Il.* 16.514–15)

In a heavily emended passage of his epideictic treatise, Menander Rhetor seems to ascribe such invocations particularly to Sappho and Alcman (*ἀναμνησκείν γὰρ πολλῶν τόπων ἐκείνοις ἔξεστιν*, 334.27–8 Russell–Wilson), and there are indeed a few fragments relating to Aphrodite that may point that way:

ἢ σε Κύπρος ἢ Πάφος ἢ Πάνορμος
... whether Cyprus or Paphos or Panormus ... you ...
(Sapph. fr. 35)
Κύπρον ἱμερτὰν λιποῖσα καὶ Πάφον περιρρύταν
... leaving lovely Cyprus and sea-girt Paphos ...
(Alcm. fr. 55)³⁵

³³ More in Weniger (1923–4), West (1978: 138) on Hes. *Op.* 2.

³⁴ As documented by Mayer (1976: 211–14). Emerson (1909: 18–22) has recorded such prayers on Hawaii.

³⁵ See also the early parody by the iambographer Ananios fr. 1 West (*Ἀπολλων, ὅς που Δῆλον ἢ Πυθῶν' ἔχεις / ἢ Νάξον ἢ Μίλητον ἢ θεῖην Κλάρων, / ἴκεο ἴκαθ' ἱέρ' ἢ†*

West (1997: 272) notes that this listing of alternative locations does not seem to occur in the 'Semitic literatures'. This is hardly surprising, given that Sumerian and Akkadian hymns only very rarely mention the abode of deities when they address them (see Chapters 1 and 2). But West rightly points out Hittite instances of this topos, one of which I have cited in Chapter 3: the hymn to the Sun-goddess of Arinna (CTH 376), which otherwise adapts Babylonian predications, begins in this way.

According to West (2007: 322–3), there are good Vedic parallels for this type of opening.³⁶ These parallels are strengthened by a more general typological correspondence: just as a hymnode may state 'Let me sing of *N*!' in the voluntative, he may ask 'Shall I sing of *N*₁ or *N*₂?' in the deliberative, and just as he may pray 'O *N* who dwells in *L*!', he may hesitate 'O *N*, whether you dwell in *L*₁ or *L*₂': both of these topoi, with their deliberative variants, have Indo-European parallels. In the Sumero-Akkadian realm, on the other hand, the deliberative variants are not attested. So while the Hittite hymns generally follow the style of their Sumero-Akkadian models, it seems that in this instance ('O *N*, whether you dwell in *L*₁ or *L*₂'), they attest a formal feature that is unknown in Sumero-Akkadian literature but possessed Indo-European similia. Its occurrence in Greek may be part of that heritage.

All arguments in favour of Near Eastern influence on archaic Greek poems ultimately rely on similarities between the respective texts. In the case of hymnic openings, it was argued in Chapter 1 that the 'Let me sing'-topos occurs already in Sumerian, where it may have evolved from refrain-like exclamations. But a 'direct line' (West 1997: 173) from here to Greece is all but excluded. Characteristic features of ultimately Sumerian style, in particular the topos of the delayed name and ornamental repetition, are absent from Greek hymnic openings. Conversely, there are no Near Eastern parallels for such well-established Greek concepts as 'beginning from' and 'remembering' the deity, or for the deliberative variant of the voluntative ('Should I sing of *N*₁ or *N*₂?'). The undeniable similarity of 'Let me sing'-phrases, which also occur outside the primary corpora studied here

Σκύθας ἀφίξεαι). Dramatic examples include Aesch. *Eu.* 292–8, Eur. *Ba.* 556–75, Ar. *Nu.* 269–74.

³⁶ Bachvarova (2009: 29–31), being unaware of this fact, treats invocatory openings in Greek and Hittite as evidence of contact between 'travelling performers'.

(e.g. in Vedic hymns), appears isolated when considered in the broader context of hymnic openings. In fact, the insistence on 'remembering' points to a distinctively Greek concept, of which the Muse-invocation is another expression: the topos of 'poetry as recall'. The Sumerian and Akkadian sources, on the other hand, emphasize the importance of writing when they speak of the transmission of poetry. Hence the comparative analysis of hymnic openings that has been presented in this chapter points to fundamental stylistic and conceptual differences between the early Greek and Mesopotamian material. The available evidence is certainly too weak to support the argument for a 'direct line', and even an indirect connection seems improbable and unnecessary.

A Case of Negative Predication

In Mesopotamia as in Greece, hymnic praises of the gods tend to follow certain characteristic *topoi* that, precisely because they are so conventional in nature, lend themselves well to comparative analysis. The present chapter is concerned with one well-attested *topos* of hymnic praise in a comparative perspective: negative predications of the type ‘Without you, god . . . (such-and-such does not happen)’.¹ Discussing general similarities in the language of hymns and prayers, West (1997: 268–9) has briefly cited a number of Greek and Akkadian instances of this predication.² Even though he does not attach any particular weight to it, the ‘Without you . . .’-predication is nevertheless an element of his general cumulative argument that ‘the Greek poets of the Archaic age were profoundly indebted to western Asia’ (West 1997: 586).

I have selected this particular subject for more detailed consideration because it can, in fact, be shown to be one of the oldest hymnic *topoi* in Mesopotamian religious poetry. Just as so much else in Akkadian hymns and prayers, this predication goes back to Sumerian models in the Old Babylonian period, and I will try to show that it occurs even in much earlier theophoric personal names. While the Sumero-Akkadian sources in themselves would be a worthwhile subject of study, they seem even more relevant in view of the fact that the classic discussions of Greek hymnic poetry have identified the same predication as a typical element of Greek praise of the gods.

¹ Or, less often, in the third person: ‘Without the god . . . (such-and-such does not happen).’ In the following discussion I use the second person, ‘Without you . . .’ (as in the common Sumerian form: *za-da nu-me-a*, and in Greek: *ἀνευ σέθεν*), as shorthand for both.

² Repeated in West (1999: 28–9) (= West 2013*b*: 11–12).

A detailed comparison has not yet been attempted. From the point of view of method, the following discussion may also be seen as a test for the argument by accumulation that West advances: does a more detailed comparison of an individual topos lead to the same result? Is the apparent similarity indeed sound evidence for Near Eastern influence on early Greek hymns? As usual, I begin in more or less chronological order with the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite evidence before turning to the Greek (and other) comparative material.

THE MESOPOTAMIAN EVIDENCE

In a recent note, Balke (2009) has compiled attestations of Sumerian personal names of the type 'N(-da)-nu-me(-a)', 'Without N', in pre-Sargonic Lagaš (c.25th century BC). N is frequently a deity (^dnanše-da-nu-me-a, 'Without Nanše') or sometimes a king (lugal-da-nu-me-a, 'Without the king'), and the name is generally understood as an elliptic rhetorical question: '(Who/what is) without N?', the implication being that nothing exists without N.³ Sommerfeld (2010: 85) adduces one apparently isolated attestation of a corresponding Akkadian name of similar antiquity from Abu Salabikh: *ba-lum-i₃-l[um]* (*Iraq* 40, pl. 17, IAS 518 col. II 5), which seems to be synonymous with Sumerian diġir-nu-me, 'Without the god', a name frequently attested in Fara.⁴ Attestations from the later 3rd millennium of names of this type, both Sumerian and Akkadian, are given by Balke (2009) and di Vito (1993: 160). A more explicit form, *man-(num)-balum-N*, 'Who (is) without N?', is attested from the Old Akkadian period onward.⁵

³ On this type of personal name in Sumerian see SG §5.4.2.6a, DGS §29.6.4, Krebernik (2002: 49), Andersson (2012: 111–12), Balke (2013: 374). Selz (1990: 303) argues that 'lugal', 'king', is in such cases a substitute for a divine name; but compare Westenholz (1975: 6), Bauer (1998: 519–20).

⁴ See Krebernik (1998: 266 n. 299), Krebernik and Postgate (2009: 16). For the corresponding OB lexical equation see *MSL* 4, 53 483–6.

⁵ Old Akkadian: *man-balum-dagan*, 'Who (is) without Dagan?' (*CT* 50.71 obv. 3 and the unpublished text from Adab cited in *MAD* 3, 95 s.v. *balum*). Later: see *AHw* and *CAD* s.v. *balu(m)*, and Stamm (1939: 238). Compare the name: a-ba-^dutu-da-nu-me-a, 'Who (is) without Utu?', in *Coll. de Clercq* I 190, an OB seal (Gelb 1960: 75).

‘N-da nu-me-a’ is also a well-established topos in Old Babylonian and later hymns and prayers. Given that Mesopotamian personal names frequently use the language of prayer,⁶ this is quite likely the same ‘N-da nu-me-a’ as in the theophoric names of the early onomasticon. Whereas the names seem to pose a rhetorical question, the attestations in the literary evidence make a clear statement. Rather than asking ‘(Who/what is) without the god?’, they state ‘Without the god, such-and-such is not’. Some illustrative Old Babylonian Sumerian examples:

kur-gal ^den-lil₂-da nu-me-a
 iri nu-du₃ a₂-dam ki li-bi₂-ib-ġar
 tur₃ nu-du₃ amaš nu-ġar-ġar
 lugal nu-il₂-e en nu-u₃-du₂
 lu₂-maḥ ereš-diġir maš₂-e nu-mu-un-dab-be₂
 erin₂-e šagana ugula nu-du₁₂-du₁₂
 i₇-da a-aštub u₅-ba nu-dun-dun
 eġir-bi ab-ta e₃ si li-bi₂-in-sa₂ kun-bi nu-mu-un-sud-e
 ab-e irimma dugud ni₂-bi-a nu-mu-un-u₃-du₂
 ku₆ engur-ra-ke₄ ġeš-ġi-a nunus nu-mu-ni-ib-nu₂-nu₂
 mušen an-na-ke₄ ki daġal-la ġud₃ la-ba-ni-ib-us₂
 an-na duggu sir₂-ra ka-bi nu-du₈-e
 a-ša₃-ga še gu-nu a-ġar₃-ra nu-si-si
 edin-na giri₁₇-zal-bi u₂-šim nu-mu₂-mu₂
 ġeš ki SAR-a ġeš daġal kur-ra-ke₄ gurun nu-il₂-e
 kur-gal ^den-lil₂-da nu-me-a
^dnin-tur₅ nu-ug₅-ge saġ-ġeš nu-ra-ra
 ab₂-e e₂-tur₃-ra amar-bi nu-šub-be₂
 u₈-e amaš-bi-a sila₄ ġa₂ ġig nu-e₃
 a-za-lu-lu ni₂-ba lu-a
 dur₂-be₂ ša₃-zu nu-mu-ni-ib₂-durun_x(?)
 maš₂-anše niġ₂-ur₂-limmu-e nuġun nu-mu-un-ni-ib-e₃
 e-ne-su₃-ud-bi nu-mu-un-u₅

Without Enlil, the great mountain,
 the city is not built, the settlement is not founded,
 the cattle-pen is not built, the sheepfold is not founded,

⁶ On the close relation between personal names and the language of prayer see Stamm (1939: 3–4, 166–82). Another example would be the phrase *mina ēpuš*, ‘what (sin) have I committed?’, which is found both in personal names (Stamm 1939: 164–5) and in prayers (Mayer 1976: 92, now also KAL 4.56 line 5’), see further Maul (1994).

the king is not promoted, the *en*-priestess is not created,
 the oracle does not determine the priest and priestess,⁷
 the team has no leader or inspector,
 the early flood at its peak does not furrow its way through the
 river-bed,
 the river's lower reaches, at the delta, are not straightened, its
 branches do not reach far,
 the sea does not generate its bounteous treasure *sponte sua*,
 the freshwater fish does not spawn in the reedbed,
 the bird of the sky does not build a nest in the wide land,
 in the sky, the massed clouds do not burst,
 in the fields, the mottled barley does not fill the land,
 fragrant herbs, the prosperity of the steppe, do not grow,
 in the orchard(?), the broad trees of the mountain do not bear fruit.
 Without Enlil, the great mountain,
 Nintu does not kill, does not strike down,
 the cow in the cattle-pen does not slip its calf,
 the ewe in its sheepfold does not produce a meagre⁸ lamb,
 the people, multiplying by themselves,
 the midwife does not . . . (?),
 the animals, the quadrupeds, do not propagate,
 they do not mate.

(*Enlil A*, 109–30)

(extract from a long *za-da nu-me-a*-litany addressed to the
 Sun-god Utu:)

[^dutu za-a-da nu-me-a] ^dgu-la nin a-zu gal kur-kur-ra-ke₄
 nam-lu₂-ulu₃ ki-gul x-e-a
 sila ka^{sic}-gal nu-kiĝ₂-a lu₂ nu-ub-uš₂-e lu₂ nu-ub-til₃-e
^rdutu za-a¹-d[a nu-me]-a ^dnergal lugal [x]-a-x-ke₄ ki-me₃-še₃ ki-bal
 nu-x-x
 [na]m-uš₂ nu-ĝa₂-ĝa₂ uĝ₃ ki-a nu-dul-e
 [^dutu za-a-d]a nu-me-a [^dni]n-maḥ nin niĝ₂ dim₂-dim₂-ma
 gi-en₃-<dur> ku₅-ku₅-da
 n[am]-lu₂-ulu₃-ke₄ nam-lu₂-ulu₃ nu-un-tar-re
 [Without you, Utu,] Gula, the great healer of the lands, does
 not let mankind seek the road to the great gate . . . (?) the burial
 place, she does not let man live, she does not let man die,

⁷ For this translation compare Attinger and Krebernik (2005: 66) on *Ĥendursaĝa* A, 75, the Utu-incantation *ASJ* 13, 45 line 46, and *ZA* 67, 4–10 line 26 (prayer to Utu).

⁸ On 'sila₄ ĝa₂ ĝig' see *ELS* §439.

[Without] you, Utu, Nergal, the king of the [...] does not
 [...] to the place of battle, the enemy land,
 does not mete out death, does not cover the earth with (dead) people,
 Without [you, Utu,] Ninmaḥ, the lady who creates all, who
 cuts the umbilical cord,
 does not decide the fate for mankind.⁹

(Incantation to Utu, *ASJ* 13, 37–71, lines 55–7)

According to these two passages, as well as the other Old Babylonian attestations,¹⁰ the predication ‘N-da nu-me-a’, ‘Without N’, is supposed to illustrate the crucial role of the deity in the normal working of all things under the sun. Without the deity, human and natural activity would cease, and even the gods would not operate properly. Note that the events enumerated in the two passages above encompass both positive and negative, or productive and destructive, aspects of life.

One sphere of Enlil mentioned in the quotation from *Enlil A*, above, is the institution of the king. This sphere is attributed to the Sun-god Utu in *ASJ* 13, 44–5, lines 41–3, and in a recently published Old Babylonian hymn to Utu from Meturan, H 180+ (ed. Cavigneaux 2009: 3–7), which also comprises a substantial ‘N-da nu-me-a’-litany (lines 15’–43’):

[sul^dutu] za-da nu-me-a nam-sipa kalam-ma-še₃ lugal nu-il₂-la₂
 ṽsul^dutu za-da¹ nu-me-a lugal ki-aḡ₂ diḡir-re-e-ne-ra ḡes⁶ḡedru
 niḡ₂ si-sa₂ šu-ne₂ nu-ḡa₂-ḡa₂

[Valiant Utu,] without you the king is not promoted to shepherddom
 over the land,

Valiant Utu, without you the just sceptre is not placed in the hands
 of the king, the beloved of the gods.

(H 180+, 40’–41’)

⁹ This is no doubt the sense: see the parallels in Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi (2000: 45 ad [93] // 183) and, in Akkadian, OB Gilg. II 163. Read perhaps: n[am]-lu₂-ulu₃-ra¹(KID) nam<<-lu₂-ulu₃>> nu-un-tar-re. An excellent image of the tablet (CBS 563) is available on CDLI (P258013, accessed 29 June 2011).

¹⁰ The passage from *Enlil A* (in which I have gratefully adopted corrections and suggestions by P. Attinger) and a different extract from the incantation to Utu were already compared by Michalowski (1991: 133–4). Other OB instances include: *Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave*, A243–4 (prayer of Lugalbanda to Utu); H 180+, 15’–43’ (hymn to Utu); *Ḥendursaḡa A*, 205’–216’; *ZA* 67, 4–10 lines 15–28 (prayer to Utu); *Inana C*, 14, 114, 190 (now restored from *UET* 6.571). Some of these instances were noted already by Katz (2006: 112 n. 25).

A very similar concept is found in a later Akkadian hymn from Assur entitled *ina balu* ^dutu *šar šamê u eršetim*, ‘Without the Sun-god, the king of heaven and earth’:

ḡešḡedru ṛagaṛ ḡešḡu-za <<PA>> bala-e a-li a-na šar-ri-im u₃
ma-ti-šu i-na ba-lum ^dutu ul in-na-din

The sceptre, tiara, throne, and emblem of rule of the city: without the Sun-god, (this) is not given to the king and his land.

(KAR 19 obv.¹ 14'–16' with CAD s.v. *palû* A5)

So our Sumerian ‘N-da nu-me-a’-predication is continued in later Akkadian hymns and prayers as *ina balu(m)*, just as the Sumerian and Akkadian names of this type and the lexical equations would lead us to expect. And *ina balu(m)* is indeed a very common predication in post-Old Babylonian religious literature.¹¹

To return to KAR 19, the hymn entitled *ina balu* ^dutu *šar šamê u eršetim*, ‘Without the Sun-god, the king of heaven and earth’: Ebeling (1954a) drew attention to an Akkadian text of the same title and similar content among the tablets from the Hittite capital Boğazköy, KBo 1.12 (CTH 792.1). This version, as Reiner and Güterbock (1967: 255 n. 5) noted, included a Hittite translation in the almost entirely lost right-hand column. But we can see, at least, that our hymnic predication *ina balu(m)* N, ‘Without N’, was known in Boğazköy, and it is probably safe to assume that it was also translated into Hittite. I am unable, however, to adduce parallels in actual Hittite hymns and prayers, despite the fact that not a few of these are addressed to the Sun-god and show clear signs of influence from Sumero-Akkadian hymns to Utu/Šamaš, who is often the subject of ‘Without you/him’-predications. It may be that, unlike other Sumero-Akkadian hymnic

¹¹ For instance: *i-na ba-li-ka* ^da-num ad-ka ul i-šak-kan šip-tu₂, ‘Without you, (Nusku,) your father Anu does not pass judgement’ (KAR 58 obv. 31, incantation to Nusku = Ebeling 1953: 36–43). Further: KAR 26 obv. 18–26 (incantation to Marduk = Ebeling 1915: 96–102); KAL 4.53 rev. 6–7 (incantation to Ninlil); ZA 61, 54 lines 99–102 (hymn to Nabu); SBH 30 rev. 17–18 (eršaḫūga-prayer to Marduk = Maul 1988: 166–71); OECT 6 pl. 7 obv. 14'–15' (‘eršaḫūga’-prayer to the personal god = Maul 1988: 228–31). All examples given by West (1997: 268–9 with n. 153) are of this type. See also Groneberg (1987: I 127 with n. 62). Predications with *ša lā*, ‘without’ (GAG §115s), probably belong here: e.g. *ša₂ la ka-ta diḡir ma-am-man eš-bar-a la i-par-ra-as*, ‘Without you, (Gira,) no god decides a case’ (KAL 4.26 obv. 10'), also AOAT 256, 3.1 I II 25–6 // 2 II 34–5 (inscr. of Nabonidus), for (late) nu-me-a = *ša lā* see MSL 1, 19 62, compare MSL 4, 53 488–90.

topoi, this particular predication was not adapted by the Hittites for use in their own religious literature. Given the fragmentary nature of the Hittite sources, however, this is far from certain.¹²

To show that the natural order cannot be maintained without the deity or to ask rhetorically, as in the personal names, who or what there is without the deity, is to illustrate the powers of the *laudandus* in the negative: without the god, such-and-such is not. One might ask whether this negative predication has a positive counterpart, and it seems that one of our earliest witnesses, the Old Babylonian hymn *Ĥendursaġa A*, has indeed posed that question. In an extended litany beginning, if correctly restored by its most recent editors (Attinger and Krebern timer 2005: 46): *lu₂-ulu₃ diġir-da nu-m[e-a]*, ‘Without the (personal) god, a man . . .’ (*Ĥendursaġa A*, 205’),¹³ the hymn enumerates in the usual manner: a man does not find his way in the street; he does not distinguish between good and bad counsel in the assembly; he does not catch fish in the river; he is not welcomed in the palace even if he rushes in to deliver a message (205’–216’). But if, the hymn continues, the personal god is favourable to the man (*tukum-bi lu₂-ulu₃ diġir-ra-ni an-na-du₁₀*),¹⁴ then the reverse is the case: he does find his way in the street; he does distinguish between good and bad counsel in the assembly; and so on (217’–227’). While the constitution of the fragmentary text remains difficult, the contrasting negative and positive perspectives on at least some of the same predications are readily apparent.

Other Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns and prayers show a different kind of variation on our theme. In the incantation to Utu *ASJ* 13, 37–71, from which I have already quoted above, the extensive ‘*za-da nu-me-a*’-litany, ‘Without you . . .’, is preceded by another litany predicated on ‘*za-a-kam*’, ‘(Such-and-such) is yours’ (29–38). This

¹² Note also that *Utu the hero*, an OB Sumerian ‘*sergida*’ to Utu, includes a verse with a ‘*za-da nu-me-a*’-predication (44): but while the immediately following passage of this hymn was translated into Hittite, see Metcalf (2011), the verse containing the ‘*za-da nu-me-a*’-predication was not. The Hittite translation of the entry ‘*ġa₂-za-e-da nu-me-en*’ in *Erim*. *Bogh*. E 7–8 (*MSL* 17, 123) is missing.

¹³ The restoration is very likely to be correct since it is supported by the Sumerian proverb *UET* 6.251 and 252 (Alster 1997: 467–8), which runs parallel to much of the following litany.

¹⁴ The crucial reading ‘*-du₁₀*’ for the verbal base is now confirmed by the collation of *UET* 6.251 obv. 7 by Ludwig (2009: 200).

presents an example of elementary stylistic variation in Sumerian religious poetry:

^dutu di-ku₅ ^dutu ka-aš-bar

^dutu di ku₅-ru za-a-kam

^dutu ka-aš bar-ra za-a-kam

^dutu za-da nu-me-a di-ku₅ nu-ku₅-da ka-aš nu-bar-ra

Utu the judge, Utu the decider,

Utu, judging is yours,

Utu, deciding is yours,

Utu, without you there is no judging, there is no deciding.

(ASJ 13, 41–4, lines 21, 29–30, 39)

Seen in parallel, these lines show that the negative ‘Without you’-predication simply rephrases the various positive expressions of the same concept that precede it. Similar juxtapositions of positive and negative expressions, although not necessarily of the same concept, are found at *Inana C*, 114–15, and *ZA 67*, 4–10 lines 10–28 (prayer to Utu).

To sum up the evidence so far: the phrase ‘N-da nu-me-a’, ‘Without N’, is clearly a very ancient Sumerian hymnic predication. It probably occurred already in theophoric names of the mid-3rd millennium and subsequently became a popular predication in Old Babylonian and later hymns and prayers, both Sumerian and Akkadian (*balum N*). An Akkadian hymn to the Sun-god containing this predication was present and probably translated in Hattusa. Its purpose as an element of hymnic praise was to illustrate in the negative the essential role of the deity in the everyday course of divine, human, and natural life, often in the form of long enumerations that could include productive but also destructive aspects of existence (war and death). Already in Old Babylonian Sumerian attestations, ‘Without N’ as a negative predication was coupled with positive expressions to the same or similar effect: ‘Without the personal god, a man is not well received at court—if he is agreeable to the personal god, a man is well received at court’, ‘Utu, judging is yours—Utu, without you there is no judging’.

THE EARLY GREEK EVIDENCE

In two classic analyses of the form and content of Greek hymns, Norden (1913: 157 n. 3, 159, 175, 349–50, 391–2) and Keyßner (1932: 29)

collected many attestations of *ἄνευ σέθεν*, ‘Without you’, as the corresponding predication may be referred to in shorthand. Although the earliest examples given there are from hymns and prayers in Aeschylus and Pindar, Keyßner (1932: 29) mentioned in passing the lyric fragment *ὥστε θεῶν μηδ’ ἔν’ Ὀλυμπίων / λῦσ’ ἄτερ φέθεν* (Alc. fr. 349b), ‘so that not one of the Olympian gods could untie (Hera) without his (Hephaestus’) help’. This is not a descriptive hymnic predication in the usual sense, but part of a narrative.¹⁵ A comparable instance is at *Hom. h.* 4.537, where Apollo lays sole claim to prophetic art on the grounds that it had been agreed that no god ‘apart from’ him (*νόσφιν ἐμείο*) should know the will of Zeus, and at *Il.* 15.213, where Poseidon warns Zeus not to spare Troy without his approval (*ἄνευ ἐμέθεν*). The gods thus define their spheres of influence with respect to the others. Similar expressions are used when human characters in Homer exclaim that a given event will not have happened ‘without the gods’, reflecting their pervasive influence in human affairs.¹⁶ While all these instances in narrative passages refer to specific situations, unlike the gnomic or generalizing use of *ἄνευ σέθεν*-predications in hymnic poetry that past scholarship has identified, they similarly reflect on the omnipresence of a god, or the gods in general, and similarly define their respective spheres of influence. Possible implications of this observation will be considered more fully at the end of the present chapter.

To turn to hymns and prayers proper, two Aeschylean prayers to Zeus provide a good starting-point. The former is uttered by the chorus grieving their murdered king Agamemnon, the latter by the Danaids in a moment of crisis as the Egyptians are about to arrive:

¹⁵ See now West (2011c) on the popular myth of the deception of Hera by Hephaestus.

¹⁶ *οὐχ ὃ γ’ ἄνευθε θεοῦ τάδε μαίνεται* (*Il.* 5.185, similarly 15.291–3), *οὔτοι ἄνευ θεοῦ ἦδε γε βουλῇ* (*Od.* 2.372), *οὐ γὰρ οἷω / οὐ σε θεῶν ἀέκητι γενέσθαι* (*Od.* 3.27–8), *οὔτοι ἄνευ θεοῦ ἦλυθε δεξιὸς ὄρνις* (*Od.* 15.531), *οὐκ ἀθεεὶ ὅδ’ ἀνὴρ Ὀδυσῆιον ἐς δόμον ἵκει* (*Od.* 18.353). Compare also Pind. *P.* 5.76 (*οὐ θεῶν ἄτερ*), Aesch. *Pers.* 164 (*οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος*), Eur. *Ba.* 764 (same phrase), *IA* 809 (*οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν*). On the underlying view of the gods, see the remarks of Lesky (1961: 22–9), who speaks of ‘der Glaube [...], der tief im Wesen der griechischen Götter gründet, daß die ganze Welt ihres Wirkens voll ist, und daß die Möglichkeit besteht, in jedem Vorgang—mag er dem Bereiche der Natur oder dem des menschlichen Tuns und Leidens angehören—etwas davon zu verspüren oder zu erkennen’.

ὡς ἰή, διαὶ Διός
 παναιτίου πανεργέτα·
 τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελεῖται;
 τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκραντόν ἐστιν;

*Ió ié, through Zeus,
 the cause of all, the agent of all:
 for what comes to pass for mortals without Zeus?
 What of these things is not divinely ordained?*
 (Aesch. A. 1485–8)

σεβί-
 ζου δ' ἰκέτας σέθεν, γαῖαοχε παγκρατὲς Ζεῦ.
 γένος γὰρ Αἰγύπτιον ὕβριν
 δύσφορον < u – > ἀρσενογενές·
 μετὰ με δρόμοισι διόμενοι
 φυγάδα μάταισι πολυθρόοις
 βίαια δίζηται λαβεῖν.
 σὸν δ' ἐπίπαν ζυγὸν ταλάν-
 του· τί δ' ἄνευ σέθεν θνατοῖς < i > τέλειόν ἐστιν;

*Honour your suppliants, almighty Zeus who holds the earth!
 For the male race of Aegyptus < . . . > unbearable in insolence(?):
 pursuing me as I flee,
 in their clamorous lewdness
 they seek to ravish me.
 But the beam of the balance is all yours:
 what comes to pass for mortals without you?*
 (Aesch. *Supp.* 814–23)

The former passage in particular shows the antithesis between the negative ‘without Zeus’-predication (ἄνευ Διός) and its positive ‘through Zeus’-counterpart (διαὶ Διός);¹⁷ the latter similarly casts ‘without you’ (ἄνευ σέθεν) in relief against a positive predication, ‘(the beam) is all yours’ (σὸν δ' ἐπίπαν). Norden (1913: 157 n. 3) and Keyßner (1932: 29) have thus rightly referred to ἄνευ σέθεν as a fundamentally antithetical topos, as the following two hymnic openings taken from Pindar make even clearer:

¹⁷ Positive predications of the type διαὶ σέ were well established to the point that they were parodied e.g. by Timocreon in an invective hymn against Wealth (διαὶ σέ γὰρ πάντ' αἰὲν ἀνθρώποις κακά, *PMG* 731.3) and several times by Aristophanes, see Fraenkel (1962: 182–3), Horn (1970: 11).

Ἐλείθυια, πάρεδρε Μοιρᾶν βαθυφρόνων,
 παῖ μεγαλοσθενέος, ἄκου-
 σον, Ἥρας, γενέτειρα τέκνων· ἄνευ σέθεν
 οὐ φάος, οὐ μέλαιναν δρακέντες εὐφρόναν
 τεὰν ἀδελφεὰν ἐλάχομεν ἀγλαόγυιον Ἥβαν.
 ἀναπνέομεν δ' οὐχ ἅπαντες ἐπὶ ἴσα·
 εἴργει δὲ πότμῳ ζυγέθ' ἔτερον ἔτερα. σὺν δὲ τίν
 καὶ παῖς ὁ Θεαρίωνος ἀρετᾷ κριθείς
 εὐδοξος αἰίδεται Σωγένης μετὰ πενταθέλοις

Eleithyia, attendant of the Moirai of profound thoughts,
 listen, daughter of mighty Hera, who delivers children! Without you
 we perceive not the light of day nor the dark night
 to attain Youth, your sister of beautiful limbs.¹⁸
 But we do not all draw breath to the same end:
 different things constrain different men, being yoked to fate.
 The son of Thearion, too, famous Sogenes, distinguished in excellence,
 is by your favour a subject of song among the pentathletes.

(Pind. N. 7.1–8)

Καφισίων ὑδάτων
 λαχοῖσαι αἵτε ναίετε καλλίπωλον ἔδραν,
 ὦ λιπαρᾶς αἰίδιμοι βασίλειαι
 Χάριτες Ἐρχομενοῦ, παλαιγόνων Μινυᾶν ἐπίσκοποι,
 κλυτ', ἐπεὶ εὖχομαι· σὺν γὰρ ὑμῖν τά <τε> τερπνὰ καὶ
 τὰ γλυκὲ' ἄνεται πάντα βροτοῖς,
 εἰ σοφός, εἰ καλός, εἴ τις ἀγλαὸς ἀνὴρ.
 οὐδὲ γὰρ θεοὶ σεμνᾶν Χαρίτων ἄτερ
 κοιρανέοντι χοροῦς
 οὔτε δαίτας· ἀλλὰ πάντων ταμίαι
 ἔργων ἐν οὐρανῷ . . .

¹⁸ Translations like 'Without you we behold neither light nor darkness of night, nor are we allotted your sister, splendid-limbed Hebe' (Race 1997: II 71) assume ellipsis of a negative before ἐλάχομεν, which is consistent with the principle given by Kühner–Gerth II/2 199: if a participle is coupled with a finite verb, and both should be negated, then the negation may be stated only once, namely at the head of the clause, although it applies to the whole clause. Disagreeing with this, Privitera (2007a) reasoned that a goddess would be an inappropriate object of ἐλάχομεν and emended to ἐλάθομεν ('restiamo ignoti alla splendida sorella tua Hebe'); in a second article he strained to explain away the examples given by Kühner–Gerth II/2 199 (Privitera 2007b). But apart from lacking convincing parallels to support his emendation, Privitera failed to consider a stylistic criterion: the antithetical element in ἄνευ σέθεν-predications is usually negative ('... such-and-such does not happen'), and in virtue of this convention, the initial negation may easily be understood as extending to the whole clause.

You that hold the springs of Kephisos
 and dwell in the place of fine steeds,
 O Graces worthy of song, queens of rich Orchomenos
 that guard the ancient Minyans,
 listen as I pray! With you all things both pleasant and
 sweet are accomplished for mortals,
 whether a man be skilful, graceful, illustrious.
 Nor do the gods without the mighty Graces
 arrange any dances
 or feasts: they see to all
 works in heaven . . .

(Pind. O. 14.1–10)

These are two opening hymnal addresses to deities, a common element of Pindar's epinicians.¹⁹ In the former case, Pindar's invocation of the birth-goddess allows him to introduce and link two important themes of the ode: the close relation between the (less successful) father Thearion and his (more successful) son Sogenes, and the various fates that manifest themselves in men's lives between the convergent moments of birth and death.²⁰ Framing these themes, the *ἄνευ σέθεν*-predication articulates the universal truth that no one can grow up without first having been born—that is to say, that no one exists without the help of Eleithyia; like a hinge, the corresponding positive predication then leads Pindar to introduce the victor: for as an attendant of the Moirai, Eleithyia seems to have assured an excellent fate by her favour (*σὺν δὲ τίνι*) in this particular instance.²¹

¹⁹ See most recently Pitotto (2009), and Ch. 4.

²⁰ As Pindar later puts it (54–63): everyone by nature is distinct in his allotted way of life, one has this, the other that (*φύῃ δ' ἕκαστος διαφέρομεν βιοτὰν λαχόντες / ὁ μὲν τὰ, τὰ δ' ἄλλοι*), but Moira does not grant complete happiness to anyone, and Thearion has received a decent measure of prosperity (*ἐοικότα καιρὸν ὄλβου*) and can now enjoy real fame in the song (which the victory of his son has occasioned). See Young (1970: 635–40) and Most (1985: 134–40, 182–6) for detailed analyses of the opening in relation to this ode and to Pindar's poetry in general.

²¹ Compare the interpretation of Dönt (1985: 107–8): 'Es wird wohl richtig sein, wenn man gesagt hat, daß die ersten Verse zunächst nichts anderes bedeuten, als daß wir alle geboren werden [...] *πότμος* und *σὺν δὲ τίνι* führen immer näher von der allgemeinen Formulierung des Hymnus, *Μοῖραι—ἄνευ σέθεν*, an den Einzelfall heran: gegenüber den Moiren ist der Potmos bereits das über dem einzelnen Menschenleben in seinem Verlauf waltende Schicksal, und *σὺν δὲ τίνι*, was *ἄνευ σέθεν* nun positiv aufnimmt, führt zu Sogenes selbst: die göttliche Begabung, die ihm zur Stunde seiner Geburt zuteil wurde, ist an seiner Leistung wirklich sichtbar geworden'. See also Race (1990: 87–9).

In the latter passage, the antithetical ‘With you/without you’-predication illustrates the goddesses’ powers in the spheres of earth and heaven. These are the general attributes of the Graces that prepare Pindar’s mention of their specific powers relevant to the particular occasion (showing favour to the victor and to the revellers, 16–20) in the second half of the ode. Thus the more general ‘with you (σὺν ὑμῖν) all things both pleasant and sweet are accomplished for mortals’ (5–6) is probably echoed in the second half by the more specific ‘the Minyan land is victorious through your will (σεῦ ἔκατι)’ (19–20).²²

Aeschylus’ use of the *ἄνευ* σέθεν-predication in the *Agamemnon* may be called gnomic. In the light of the disastrous events that have unfolded, the chorus reflects on the τέλος that is inevitably achieved by the will of Zeus, an insight as old as the opening of the *Iliad*.²³ A Theognidean couplet attests a similar, though more generalizing, gnomic statement:

θεοῖς εὖχου, †θεοῖσιν ἔπι κράτος· οὐτοὶ ἄτερ θεῶν
γίνεται ἀνθρώποις οὐτ’ ἀγάθ’ οὔτε κακά

Pray to the gods, theirs is(?) the power! For not without the gods
do good or bad things happen to men.

(Thgn. 171–2 West)²⁴

In the prayer to Zeus in the *Suppliants*, the antithetical predication (σὸν δ’ ἐπίπαν ζυγὸν ταλάντου· τί δ’ ἄνευ σέθεν θνατοῖς<ι> τέλειόν ἐστιν;) lends force to the plea: here the disaster has not yet happened, and Zeus could still intervene at the critical moment. So the *Agamemnon* and the *Suppliants* provide a retrospective and a prospective example

²² See Dönt (1983) and Race (1990: 97–102) on the correspondences between general and specific predications in the halves of this ode.

²³ Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή (Il. 1.5), and compare also Ζεῦ πάτερ, (...) σέο δ’ ἐκ τὰδε πάντα πέλονται (Il. 13.631–2), Ζεὺς πάντων ἐφορᾷ τέλος (Sol. 13.17 West), οὐδὲ θεοῖσι αὐθαίρετα πάντα πέλονται / νόσφι Διὸς· κείνος γὰρ ἔχει τέλος ἡδὲ καὶ ἀρχήν (TrGF II fr. adesp. 621), πίπτει δ’ ἀσφαλὲς οὐδ’ ἐπὶ νώτω, κορυφᾷ Διὸς εἰ κρανθῇ πρᾶγμα τέλειον (Aesch. Supp. 91–2), τελέων / τελειότατον κράτος, ὄλβιε Ζεῦ (Aesch. Supp. 525–6).

²⁴ Compare Thgn. 165–6, further οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν χωρὶς ἀνθρώποις θεῶν (Eur. fr. 391.1 Kannicht), οὗτις ἄνευ θεῶν / ἀρετὰν λάβεν, οὐ πόλις, οὐ βροτός. / θεὸς ὁ πάμμητις (Simon. fr. 21.1–3, PMG 526), τίς δὲ βίος, τί δὲ τερπνὸν ἄτερ χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης; (Mimn. fr. 1.1 West), ἄνευ δὲ θεοῦ, σεσιγαμένον / οὐ σκαιότερον χρῆμ’ ἕκαστον (Pind. O. 9.103–4), [τ]υφλα[ὶ γὰρ] ἀνδρῶν φρένες, / [ὁ]στις ἀνευθ’ Ἑλικωνιάδων etc. (Pae. 7b.18–19, see Adorjányi 2011).

of the ‘Without you’-topos depending on the dramatic situation, and in the latter case the prayer is all the more poignant for it. Pindar, on the other hand, seems to appreciate *ἄνευ σέθεν* primarily as a rhetorical device in his hymnic openings. Exploiting its antithetical structure, Pindar uses ‘With you/without you’-predications to facilitate transitions from the divine to the human *laudandus* (in the case of *Nemean* 7), and to illustrate the deity’s twin spheres of influence in preparation for his later request (*Olympian* 14).²⁵

Neither Aeschylus nor Pindar would employ the *ἄνευ σέθεν*-predication in their dramatic and epinician (imitations of) hymns and prayers if it were not an established topos in conventional religious poetry. The best examples of such poetry tend to be preserved in epigraphic form at important centres of cult like Delphi and Epidauros; although such epigraphic attestations are usually of late classical or Hellenistic (or even later) date, the conventional topoi that they exhibit are generally more ancient.²⁶ In the case of *ἄνευ σέθεν*, Aeschylus and Pindar suggest that this predication was current in religious poetry of at least the late archaic period. So consider finally the attestations, for example, in a popular paeon to Hygieia and in a sympotic hymn to Hestia:

(O Hygieia, may you be kind to me! For if there is any joy in wealth or children or the pursuits of Aphrodite, or if there is any rest from toil for men . . .)

μετὰ σείο, μάκαιρ’ Ὑγίεια,
τέθαλε καὶ λάμπει Χαρίτων ὁάροις·
σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς οὐ τις εὐδαίμων ἔφν.

With you, blessed Hygieia,
one thrives and glories in the familiarity of the Graces,
but without you no one is happy.²⁷

(PMG 813.8–10)

²⁵ Note that the antithetical structure is visible already in the Homeric comparandum οὐχ ὃ γ’ ἀνευθε θεοῦ τάδε μαίνεται, ἀλλὰ τις ἄγχι / ἔστηκ’ ἀθανάτων (Il. 5.185–6), also ἴκοντο Θήρανδε φῶτες Αἰγείδαι, / ἐμοὶ πατέρες, οὐ θεῶν ἄτερ, ἀλλὰ Μοῖρά τις ἄγεν (Pind. P. 5.75–6).

²⁶ See the introduction to Ch. 4, and the discussion of hymnic openings in Ch. 5.

²⁷ A generalizing statement like this is a classic locus for the indefinite use of the third person (τέθαλε καὶ λάμπει), particularly in contrast to οὐ τις in the antithesis. See Wackernagel (1920–4: I 111–13). The most recent edition (Furley and Bremer 2001: II 175–80) seems to understand the various blessings as the subject of τέθαλε καὶ λάμπει, although the parallels adduced there are personal. The popularity of this hymn seems

(Hestia, you hold an eternal position in the dwellings of gods
and men, and a great privilege . . .)

οὐ γὰρ ἄτερ σοῦ
εἰλαπίναι θνητοῖσιν, ἔν' οὐ πρώτη πυμάτῃ τε
Ἰστίῃ ἀρχόμενος σπένδει μελιγδέα οἶνον

For not without you
are there banquets among mortals, where the leader
does not fail to libate honey-sweet wine to Hestia first and last.
(*Hom. h.* 29.4–6)²⁸

On this basis, a comparative synthesis may be attempted. The similarities between predications of the type ‘Without you . . .’ (za-da nu-me-a/ἀνευ σέθεν) are most obvious in terms of form. Both in the Sumero-Akkadian realm and in Greece, the predication can be articulated in a rhetorical question (‘What is without the god?’, in personal names, in Aeschylus) or in a negative statement (‘Without the god, such-and-such is not’, in hymns and prayers). Further, the predication in this negative form may be complemented by various positive predications. We had observed this already at the earliest attainable stage, in Old Babylonian Sumerian, and in many Greek attestations whose structure has rightly been characterized as antithetical.

There is, however, variation in meaning and context. The Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and prayers use the ‘Without you . . .’-predication to illustrate—often in extended litanies—the crucial importance of the deity for the normal workings of the divine, human, and natural world. The Greek attestations are more focused on the relevance to concrete human matters. This is in keeping with comparable expressions in Homer that refer to a divine presence or intervention in the affairs of mortals. A comparison between the Old

to have caused considerable textual variations: some have followed an uncertain variant *δαροι*, instead of *δάροις*, and have taken this as the subject (Maas 1933: 148; Wagman 1995: 162); others used to print *πάντα* after *τέθαλε* (Norden 1913: 159; Keyßner 1932: 29), another weak variant. In my view the antithesis between *μετὰ σείο* (sc. *τις*) . . . *τέθαλε* and *σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς οὐτις* . . . *ἔφν* leads to the most plausible interpretation.

²⁸ See Keyßner (1932: 29) for attestations in later (especially Orphic) hymns; *Hom. h.* 29 may itself be very late, according to the Neoplatonic interpretation recently advanced by Gelzer (2003). Compare also Cat. 61.61–4 (*nil potest sine te Venus, / fama quod bona comprobet, / commodi capere, at potest / te volente*) and other Roman examples in Nisbet and Hubbard (1970: 307) ad *Hor. Od.* 1.26.9 (*nil sine te*).

Babylonian Sumerian hymn *Enlil A*, cited in the preceding section, and the prayer to Zeus in the *Agamemnon* illustrates the difference. While the former enumerates all kinds of events in heaven and earth that do not happen without Enlil, the latter limits the topos in its dramatic concision: what comes to pass for mortals without Zeus?

It was possible to show that, as in so many other cases, the Akkadian instances of this predication were really taken over from Sumerian. Hittite hymns, which were influenced by Sumero-Akkadian models in many ways, seem not to have adopted it, although an Akkadian hymn to the Sun-god of this type was known at Hattusa. So we cannot show, as we can in other cases, that this was an easily transferable topos outside the Mesopotamian orbit, and if we postulated a Greek borrowing, we should look for common deities like the Sun-god to whom 'Without you . . .'-predications were frequently applied and who may thus have served as a conduit. Yet in the Greek evidence, I can see no obvious candidate.

A convincing conclusion therefore seems difficult to reach. The argument must rest ultimately on the degree of similarity between the literary attestations. But the strength of the supposed connection is seriously undermined by Vedic parallels ('Great Indra, without whom nothing') which West (2007: 309–10 with n. 8) has adduced in a later work on Indo-European poetry and myth, adding in a note that there are 'parallels too in Akkadian hymns'; to this one might compare another prominent example that falls outside the core corpus of the present study, at the famous opening of the Gospel according to John: 'All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made.'²⁹ From the point of view of method, the argument in favour of a Greek borrowing must therefore be seen as problematic. The evidence suggests, rather, that our predication is not only of great antiquity, but also widespread. In both the Greek and the Sumero-Akkadian sources, we can perceive more plausible parallels in earlier, clearly unrelated forms of religious expression outside hymns and prayers, namely experiences of divine intervention in Homer and early theophoric personal names in Sumerian and Akkadian. To put

²⁹ 'yásmād indrād brhatáh kīm caném řté' (*Rigveda* 2.16.2); πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν (*Jn* 1.3): note again the antithetical structure. On the latter passage, the standard commentary of Bultmann (1956: 19 n. 8) recognizes the Mesopotamian as well the Graeco-Roman comparanda; see already Norden (1913: 349).

it very simply, a given god has power both among the other gods of the pantheon (Poseidon: 'If Zeus does this without my approval, I will be angry') and in the human sphere (Pindar: 'Without Eleithyia, we do not see the light'), and this conception of the gods as having influence both in the pantheon and in human affairs is common both to the Greek and to the Mesopotamian world.³⁰ Given this shared underlying conception, it is not difficult to imagine that 'za-da nu-me-a'/*ἄνευ σέθεν* could have arisen independently, and the Vedic parallels add to the sense that this was not such a specific predication that we should postulate a common source for all of its instances. On the basis of the present evidence I see no reason why Greek *ἄνευ σέθεν* should be more likely to have been borrowed from the Near East than to have developed independently or to have been inherited.

³⁰ See Chs. 1 and 2.

Variations on the Names of the Goddess

The present chapter is concerned with the goddesses Inana/Ištar and Aphrodite and an aspect of their depiction in hymnic poetry. As is well known, and as the material presented in this study illustrates, Inana and Ištar were highly influential figures in the Mesopotamian pantheon. We have seen that hymns to these goddesses, which dominate the Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian material, sometimes present Inana and Ištar as equals or even rivals of the chief gods. Ištar also features among the small group of Mesopotamian deities, alongside the Sun-god and the Storm-god, whose hymns were translated by the Hittites. This notoriety resulted from the expanding influence of Ištar and her local manifestations in Syria and Anatolia via Nineveh in the course of the 2nd millennium BC.¹

In searching for possible points of contact in early Greece, the following discussion will not attempt a comparative biography of Inana/Ištar—this being perhaps the most complex of all Mesopotamian deities²—and Aphrodite. Nor will there be any attempt to propose a new and radical answer to the vexed question of Aphrodite's origins in the light of Near Eastern sources. As an epigraph to the present chapter, the view of a leading expert on Aphrodite may be cited:

It is very adventurous to undertake an inquiry into the *origin* of a deity, and I therefore prefer to speak of the *genesis* of the goddess. This term

¹ See Archi (1977), Wegner (1981: 11–20), Haas (1994: 345–50), Beckman (1998).

² 'Die Göttin hat nahezu alle möglichen Epitheta auf sich gezogen, fast kein Bereich des menschlichen Lebens fällt nicht in ihre Zuständigkeit' (RIA s.v. Inanna/Ištar A§9). On her nature and development see e.g. Heimpel (1982), Groneberg (1997), Selz (2000), Edzard (2004: 576).

implies the existence of a process, of transformations and of adaptations, and better reflects the fluid nature of the historical contexts.³

The following discussion will start from a method by which the ancients themselves tried to comprehend the complexity of Inana/Ištar: the meanings of her various names and epithets. This will lead to a detailed interpretation of a famous episode in Hesiod's *Theogony*, which hinges on an aetiology of the names and epithets of Aphrodite, and which was once, in a past era of Classical scholarship, thought to be an old but originally independent hymn to the goddess. My ultimate aim will be to formulate a coherent analysis of Hesiod's depiction of Aphrodite in the light of the relevant Near Eastern sources, which consist mainly of hymns to Inana and Ištar. Although a great deal has already been said and written on the general topic, I hope that there is still some scope to take a fresh look at the genesis of Aphrodite in early Greek religious poetry.

NAMING INANA AND IŠTAR

As the late Assyriologist W. G. Lambert has put it: 'To the ancients a name was a hypostasis of the person and not an identification-tag simply. Thus to present and detail a god's names was to offer a theology of the deity in question.'⁴ The importance of the divine name was indeed understood, as shown by the following passage from the well-known Ištar-incantation that was already discussed in Chapter 3. We have at our disposal two 1st-millennium texts

³ '[I]l est très aventureux d'entreprendre une enquête sur l'*origine* d'une divinité. C'est pourquoi je préfère parler de *genèse* de la déesse. Le terme suppose un processus, des transformations, des adaptations et rend davantage compte de la fluidité des contextes historiques' (Pirenne-Delforge 2001: 170). This entails that I likewise agree with her later verdict that it would be 'trop simple de réduire la figure d'Aphrodite à un emprunt pur et simple à l'Orient' (Pirenne-Delforge 2001: 172). On supposed Near Eastern derivations of Aphrodite—including the name itself—see recently e.g. Lévêque (1984), Burkert (1985: 152–6), Penglas (1994: 160–8), West (1997: 56–7), Buchholz (1999: 648–55), Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge (1999), West (2000) (= West 2013b: 341–6), Budin (2003: 199–282), Budin (2004), Valdés (2005: 16–43), Breitenberger (2007: 7–20), Cyrino (2010: 19–21), Pirenne-Delforge (2010: 9–12).

⁴ Lambert (1982: 210). See also Lambert (2013: 147–68), Radner (2005: 15–19) on ancient Near Eastern conceptions of the name.

(NB, NA) and an older Akkadian (Bo) and Hittite (Hi) version from Boğazköy:

(NB) *gaš-ra-a-ti ma-al-ka-a-ti šu-mu-ki ši-ru*

(NA) [] *ši-i-ru*

(Bo) *ši-ra-ṛtiṛ ma-al-qa-ti šu-um-ki ši-ra(-)at-ti-ma*⁵

(Hi) [. . . -a]r *ku-e-da-ni da-aš-šu ŠUM-an-ti-it da-aš-šu*

(NB) You are mighty, you are the ruler, your names are great

(NA) [] are great

(Bo) You are great, you are the ruler, your name is great

(Hi) Whose [] is important, your name is important.⁶

(*Incantation to Ištar*, CTH 312 = STC II, 75 obv. 4 // Or NS 59, 487,

K.17519 4' // KUB 37.36 obv. 7'-8' // KUB 31.141 obv. 4)

Ištar's great name reflects her status, and to describe the name is to describe the deity's nature. 'Where is not your name, where are not your cults?', the same incantation goes on to ask (STC II, 75 obv. 15 // KUB 37.36 obv. 17'-18'). Ištar's important and ubiquitous name, aptly illustrated in this case by the Hittite translation of her incantation, reflects both her eminence in the pantheon and her widely observed worship.

Religious poetry often seeks to relate the name to the nature of a god, particularly in the case of Inana/Ištar. An early instance is found in a mid-3rd millennium composition about Inana from Abu Salabikh, OIP 99 329 (and 388). Krebernik (1998: 324) has noticed that the signs MU.NE, which recur in this composition, could be interpreted as 'mu-ne', 'her name'. This produces good sense for phrases like: ṛmunus sa₆-ga mu-ne (OIP 99 329, col. I 5), 'her name is

⁵ *šir* has merged with the first word of what should be the following verse, *atti* (see Zgoll 2003: 61 ad loc.).

⁶ One would like to restore a word like 'rule'—compare *da-a-aš-šu ṛiṣṛ-ḫ[i-i]š-ša tu-uk-pat₂ pi₂-ia-a[n]*, 'important lordship(?) is given to you (Sun-god)' (KUB 31.127 + col. I 19, CTH 372: see the discussion by Melchert 1988: 219–20)—but not necessarily *[ud-da-a-a]r*, 'word; matter', with Reiner and Güterbock (1967: 258). Although *daššu-*, 'strong; heavy; important', is a perfectly common Hittite attribute of gods (see HEG s.v. *dassu-*), it does not seem to be the obvious translation of Akkadian *širum* but would correspond rather to an adjective like *kabtum* in this connotation. But perhaps the divergence is not so large given that both *širum* and *kabtum* are subsumed under the broader semantic field MAḪ, 'great', in the S^a vocabulary (MSL 3, 82 23'–27'), which is known to have been in use at Boğazköy (Weeden 2011a: 94–7).

“sweet lady””.⁷ Following Krebernik’s suggestion, one could relate the line: a^den-lil₂ mi₂ du₁₁-ga (*OIP* 99 329, col. IV 3’), ‘Whom father Enlil has honoured’, to one of those names of Inana: mi₂ du₁₁-ga mu-ne (*OIP* 99 388, col. V 5), ‘Her name is “honoured one”’.⁸ If correct, this correspondence would explain Inana’s name on the basis of the honour with which Enlil treats her, presumably in the divine assembly, ‘mi₂ du₁₁’ being a common expression in Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns for the mutual affection and respect among the gods (see Chapter 1).⁹

Krebernik’s interpretation of this composition as a catalogue of names of Inana in any case seems plausible in the light of later parallels. Consider the following passage from a long Akkadian hymn to Ištar, probably of Middle Babylonian origin, which incidentally begins with the chief gods likewise ‘honouring’ (*kunnûm*, the usual Akkadian equivalent of Sumerian ‘mi₂ du₁₁’) Inana/Ištar:

[šu-t]u-ru šu-mu-ša₂
^da-num ^den-lil₂ u ^de₂-a u₂-ba-’i-lu-ši u₂-kan-nu-ši ^di₂-gi₃-gi₃
 iš-ti-iu-um-ma šu-uš-ša₂ si₃-ik-ra-ša₂ ra-bi-iu-um
 ša₂ qa₂-ad-mi-iš iz-ku-ru-ši a-bu da-di-ša₂ ^da-nu-um
^dnin-an-na šar-ra-tu₄ ša₂-ma-a-me

[] her (Ištar’s) names are surpassing:
 Anu, Enlil, and Ea have magnified her, the Igigi have honoured her.
 Her first name, her great title,
 by which her father Anu, her favourite, has called her of old:
 ‘Nin-an-a’ = Queen-of-heaven.

(*Queen of Nippur* col. III 51–5, ed. Lambert 1982)

Each of the three main gods, Anu, Enlil, and Ea, attributes a name to Ištar for which the hymn then provides an explanation. In this case the god Anu (from ‘an’, ‘heaven’ in Sumerian) gives her the Sumerian

⁷ Krecher (1992: 291), on the other hand, refers to this text as ‘perhaps the earliest example of a special kind of hymn: the self-praise of Inanna’. Krecher presumably understands MU as possessive ‘-ġu₁₀’, ‘my’, which one would expect to feature in the self-praise of the goddess.

⁸ Compare fragment *OIP* 99 213, II 5’–6’ (UD.GAL.NUN-orthography): ^dinana-KU mi₂ NUN.ŠA.ŠID (= ^dinana-ra mi₂ mu-na-du₁₁), ‘he honoured Inana’ (with *ELS* ex. 337).

⁹ For another example of archaic play on names involving Inana, see the inscription E’annatum 1.5.23–30 (*FAOS* 5) with Selz (1992: 200).

name (N)inana, which the hymn interprets as ‘Queen of heaven’.¹⁰ Further aspects of Inana follow this interpretation in a loose associative style: she rules not just the heavens but also the earth, whose people she loves, just like Šamaš, who is her twin, and so on (col. III 56–8). Other examples of etymologies of the names of Inana/Ištar in religious poetry could be cited.¹¹ Of course, the same strategy is also used to describe other major gods and is by no means restricted to Inana/Ištar.¹² But it is clear that the presentation and interpretation of her established name(s) and epithets were seen as a means to define the nature and to praise the attributes of this particularly complex goddess.

NAMING APHRODITE

These preliminary considerations may bring to mind, on the Greek side, a brief episode in Hesiod’s *Theogony* where the story of Aphrodite’s birth is combined with a list and aetiology of her names and epithets. The Sky-god Ouranos has been castrated by his son Kronos, who cast his genitals into the sea, and now a goddess emerges from the foam that has formed around them:

τὴν δ’ Ἀφροδίτην
 {ἀφρογενέα τε θεῶν καὶ ἐυστέφανον Κυθέρειαν}
 κικλήσκουσι θεοὶ τε καὶ ἄνθρωποι, οὐνεκ’ ἐν ἀφρώ
 θρέφθη· ἀτὰρ Κυθέρειαν, ὅτι προσέκυρσε Κυθήροις·
 Κυπρογενέα δ’, ὅτι γέντο περικλύστῳ ἐνὶ Κύπρῳ
 ἦδ’ ἐφίλομμεϊδέα, ὅτι μηδέων ἐξεφαάνθη.
 τῇ δ’ Ἔρος ὠμάρτησε καὶ Ἴμερος ἔσπετο καλός

¹⁰ This etymology of the name Inana may in fact be historically correct. See Edzard (2004: 576) and *RIA* s.v. Nin-an(na).

¹¹ For instance, the opening of *BLT* 13, a recently published Old Babylonian prayer to Ištar, where the goddess is addressed as *Sin-ništum*, which means both ‘woman’ (*sinništum*) and ‘Moon (*Sin*)-lionness (*nēštum*)’, alluding to Ištar’s father and to her animal: see A. R. George’s remarks ad loc. (‘an early example of speculative etymologizing as a tool for revealing the characteristics immanent in a divine personality’). Compare also the late syncretistic hymn to Ištar *AfO* 50, 23–4.

¹² In particular the fifty names of Marduk and their interpretation in *Enuma eliš*, now fully edited by Lambert (2013). For further examples see Lambert (1982: 210–11). The explanatory texts edited and discussed by Livingstone (1986: 17–70) are sometimes comparable in character.

γεινομένη τὰ πρῶτα θεῶν τ' ἐς φῶλον ἰούση·
 ταύτην δ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς τιμὴν ἔχει ἥδ' ἐλέογχε
 μοῖραν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
 παρθενίους τ' ὄαρους μειδήματά τ' ἐξαπάτας τε
 τέρψιν τε γλυκερὴν φιλότητά τε μειλιχίην τε.

Gods and men call her Aphrodite
 {and the foam-born goddess and Kythereia of the beautiful garland}
 because she was nurtured in foam (*aphros*),
 and Kythereia because she arrived at Cythera,
 Kyprogenes because she was born in sea-washed Cyprus,
 and Philommeides because she appeared from the genitals (*mēdea*).
 Eros attended her and beautiful Himeros followed
 as she was born and first went to join the gods,
 for this is the privilege she holds of old, her allotted share
 among men and immortal gods:
 innocent palaver, smiles (*meidēmata*), and deceits,
 pleasant joys, love, and kindness.

(Hes. *Th.* 195–206)

Hesiod's account of Aphrodite's birth from the genitals of Ouranos is an interlude in the Myth of Succession, the story of how Zeus came to rule the gods after the fall of Ouranos and Kronos. While scholars have for a long time sought to relate the Myth of Succession to various Near Eastern sources,¹³ most notably a Hurro-Hittite composition now (tentatively) referred to as the *Song of the Beginning* (*Das Lied vom Ursprung*),¹⁴ they have tended to concentrate on parallels

¹³ See most recently Haubold (2013: 52–71), López-Ruiz (2012), Rutherford (2011), van Dongen (2011), López-Ruiz (2010), Weigelt (2010), Rutherford (2009), Lane Fox (2008: 273–94, 358–69), Bremmer (2008: 1–18), Bernabé (2004a: 298–307), Bernabé (2004b), and the general remarks of Blümer (2001: I 261–9), previously e.g. Kullmann (1999: 195–6), West (1997: 276–305), Osborne (1996: 142), Erren (1991), Bernabé (1989), Burkert (1987: 19–24), Walcot (1966: 1–26), Erbse (1964), Schwabl (1960), Heubeck (1955), Lesky (1950). The Near Eastern parallels to the Myth of Succession are now generally considered to be indicative of some form of contact. An objection of the type raised by Sale (1961: 509 n. 4) may be of historical interest: 'The extreme similarity between the emasculation of Uranus and the wish-fulfilment of the Oedipus complex makes it difficult to accept wholeheartedly the theory of borrowing from the Hittite... it seems likely enough that both peoples hit upon this detail independently.'

¹⁴ See Corti (2007) and Weeden (2011a: 102–3) on the new title. An up-to-date transliteration and translation is E. Rieken *et al.* (eds.), <hethiter.net/> CTH 344 (TX 2009-08-31). Beckman (2011) has announced a new edition.

between the respective patterns of succession between the great rulers and paid rather less attention to the brief interlude of Aphrodite's birth. It is this thread, not the Myth of Succession as a whole, that the following discussion will take up.

Like many free-standing hymns, the brief interlude in the *Theogony* establishes the genealogy (born of Ouranos) and the places of cult (Cyprus, Cythera) that are characteristic of the deity. As West (1966: 212) notes, the relation of Aphrodite to Ouranos was probably suggested by the cult title *Oὑpavía*, which was particularly widely used of Aphrodite.¹⁵ Plato makes this connection (*Smp.* 180d), and indeed the story told by Hesiod of Aphrodite's birth and arrival at Cyprus and Cythera points towards her name and epithet *Oὑpavía* when compared with Near Eastern and other Greek sources. It is well known that the temples of Aphrodite *Oὑpavía* on Cyprus and Cythera were traced to Syrian origins, in the latter case via Phoenician mediation, by Herodotus (1.105).¹⁶ Indeed, a dedication of the 4th century BC from Piraeus indirectly attests a cult of Aphrodite *Oὑpavía* in the Cypriot city of Kition, which was re-founded in the late 9th century BC by Phoenicians from Tyrus after its destruction in c.1200 BC.¹⁷ The Phoenician association of the *Oὑpavía*-aspect suggested by Herodotus agrees very well with the Near Eastern conception of Inana/Ištar as the 'Queen of heaven', for which the Akkadian hymn just cited provides a convenient example: ^dnin-an-na šar-ra-tu₄ ša₂-ma-a-me, '(N)inana, i.e. Queen-of-heaven'. That famous name spread far beyond Mesopotamia: Ištar is thus invoked in the Akkadian incantations contained in the *babili* ('Babylonian')-ritual from Boğazköy (MUNUS.LUGAL ŠA-ME-E, 'Queen of Heaven', KUB

¹⁵ On Aphrodite *Oὑpavía* see e.g. Pironti (2007: 107–50), Pirenne-Delforge (2005), Rosenzweig (2004: 59–81), Ustinova (1999: 35–40), Pirenne-Delforge (1994: 15–25, 437–9), Rudhart (1975: 131–4), Nilsson (1967: I 520–3), Settis (1966: 97–159).

¹⁶ Compare Paus. 1.14.6–7; the temple of *Oὑpavía* on Cythera was supposedly the oldest and most sacred of the temples of Aphrodite among the Greeks (3.23.1). Sappho possibly addressed a cletic hymn to Aphrodite from Syria, according to Men. Rh. 334.31 Russell–Wilson. See also Parker (1996: 196 n. 158), Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge (1999: 270–1), Pirenne-Delforge (2001), Karageorghis and Karageorghis (2002). Note that iconographic representations of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, who was sometimes conceived as dwelling in the heavens, were current in funerary contexts on Cyprus since the late Bronze Age; but on Cyprus the emphasis lay on her protective role, in particular with respect to the afterlife: see Carbillet (2011).

¹⁷ IG II² 4636 with IG II² 337: see Ulbrich (2008: 138, 336–40). See also Bonnet (1996: 69–86), Niehr (2003), Bonnet (2010: 88–92), Bourogiannis (2012).

39.70+ col. I 8'),¹⁸ and Phoenician Astart, to whom she was closely related, seems also to have been conceived as a celestial goddess.¹⁹ It should also be emphasized that Inana/Ištar, according to Mesopotamian theology, was descended either from the Moon-god Nanna/Suen or from the Sky-god An(u); in the latter genealogy she normally had no mother,²⁰ just as Aphrodite is, in the Hesiodic version, descended purely from the genitals of Ouranos without female contribution. So it seems that both the genealogy and the cult sites of Aphrodite, as Hesiod presents them, point towards *Oὐρανία*, which a recent and authoritative survey has described as 'A kind of generic designation [of Aphrodite] that has something to say about her history, her journey and her ancient relationship to other queens of Sky, among whom Astarté, following Mesopotamian Ishtar, is doubtless a major instance'.²¹

To turn first to the framework of the Myth of Succession in which the Aphrodite-episode is contained, one may note that Hesiod, the *Song of the Beginning*, and the third comparandum, the supposed Phoenician theogony reported by Philo of Byblos in his *Phoenician History* (*FGrHist* 790 F 1–7), all start from the same point: the emasculation of the Sky-god by his rival for kingship. Yet no goddess like Aphrodite is born from the discarded genitals in the Near Eastern sources. Instead the extant versions each present a series of local aetiologies. According to the supposed Phoenician theogony, Kronos castrated Ouranos near some rivers and springs. The place where his blood trickled into the sources and the water of the rivers, it is said, is still pointed out (*FGrHist* 790 F 2.29). As Baumgarten (1981: 212)

¹⁸ See Wegner (1981: 32–3), Beckman (2002), Beckman (2010).

¹⁹ A 6th–5th-century BC inscription on a sarcophagus from Sidon speaks of Astarte dwelling in the *šmm* 'drm, 'les cieux magnifiques/puissants' (Bonnet 1996: 32, see her Appendix 1 B.E4). See further RAC s.v. Himmelskönigin (d), Ribichini (1985: 86–90), Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge (1999: 259).

²⁰ RIA s.v. Inanna/Ištar A. §8.

²¹ '[U]ne sorte d'appellation générique qui a quelque chose à dire de son histoire, de son parcours et de son antique parenté avec d'autres reines du Ciel, dont Astarté, après l'Ishtar mésopotamienne, est indubitablement une expression majeure' (Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge 1999: 271). Dickmann Boedeker (1974: 31) suggested that the episode might be motivated by the Homeric genealogy of Aphr. as the daughter of Zeus (*Διὸς θυγάτηρ*, see esp. *Il.* 5.428), who is at least etymologically descended from an Indo-European Sky-god (similarly Dunkel 1988–90: 8–10; Allen 2004: 76 n. 17). The derivation of Aphr. that underlies this argument has not convinced (the comparative study of Briquel 1980 does not even mention it); see the remarks of Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge (1999: 252 n. 11), Budin (2003: 33–8).

remarks in his commentary, 'Byblos had a famous river nearby—Nahr Ibrahim—which ran red at certain times of the year. The emphasis on the dripping blood into the rivers is an allusion to the famous red waters of Nahr Ibrahim. For Philo the castration of Ouranos must be the myth which explains the redness of the water: given the special nature of the blood which dripped into the waters they become red periodically.'²² Since Philo is seeking to show that Hesiod and other Greek poets had in fact appropriated and embellished his Phoenician stories (*FGrHist* 790 F 2.40), he may have modelled his version of the castration of Ouranos on Hesiod in order to make his claim seem more plausible.²³ Whatever his source, it is clear that Philo uses the castration of Ouranos to set up a local aetiology. Likewise in the case of the *Song of the Beginning*, Anu's genitals, bitten off and swallowed by Kumarbi, impregnate Kumarbi with the Storm-god, the river Tigris, and the god Tašmišu. By spitting out some mixture, presumably of semen and spittle, it has been argued that Kumarbi brings forth the Tigris at a mountain named Kanzura.²⁴ Thus another aetiology of local, in this instance Hurrian, interest may have been established.

The Orphic theogony on which the Derveni papyrus (4th century BC) comments appears to have included an episode in which the Sky-god's genitals are likewise bitten off.²⁵ According to Hesiod, the genitals of Ouranos are severed in a different way, by cutting rather than biting, but like in the *Song of the Beginning*, they bring forth a triad: the Erinyes, the Giants, and the Meliai, born from the blood and the Earth (*Th.* 182–7). Hesiod's version of what happened to the genitals is introduced with a phrase that one might expect to hear in Homeric battle-narrative (οὗ τι ἐτάωσια ἔκφυγε χεῖρός, compare e.g. *Il.* 11.376, 14.407 = 22.292). It is thus emphasized that, just as in the

²² Another mention (and another aetiology) of the red waters of this river is at Lucian *Syr. D.* 8, see Lightfoot (2003: 327–8).

²³ On the sources of Philo, see recently Ribichini (2008: 277–84), Corsi i Meya (2004).

²⁴ The relevant passages of *CTH* 344, *KUB* 33.120+ col. I 38–41 and col. II 78–9, are still fragmentary: see Haas (2006: 137), Archi (2009: 212), Haas (2011: 187), and van Dongen (2012: 56–7) on this Tigris-aetiology. The birth of the river seems to be interpreted differently by Beckman (2011: 28–9), who has it emerge from Kumarbi directly.

²⁵ *Orph.* fr. 8 Bernabé, see West (1983: 88–93), Bernabé (2002: 104–11), Ferrari (2013: 59–61, 71–2).

Hurrian and (supposedly) Phoenician accounts, the aetiology that follows the castration is at least as important as the act itself. Aphrodite stands outside the triad, being born from the sea, but it is she who receives the most elaborate aition.²⁶

As discussed at the beginning of the present section, the association of Aphrodite with Ouranos is likely to have been prompted by the cult title *Οὐρανία*, an aspect of Aphrodite that is thought to reflect her eastern manifestation as the Sky-goddess. The story of the foam is, however, Greek, being based on the *aphros*-etymology, as are the names and epithets that the story is supposed to explain. The crucial connection to the castration-episode in the Myth of Succession lies in Aphrodite's established epic epithet *φιλομμειδής*, which Hesiod relates both to the genitals (*μήδεα*) of Ouranos and to the smiles (*μειδήματα*) that are the lot of Aphrodite.²⁷ The original form and meaning of this epithet remain obscure. Compounds in *φιλο-* are already attested in Mycenaean Greek (Risch §71b), and *-μμ-* points to < **-σμ-* and hence to the 'smiles' of the latter etymology proposed by Hesiod.²⁸ That was also the understanding of Alcaeus, whose fr. 384 is now rendered by Liberman (1999: II 169), taking up an older suggestion by R. Pfeiffer, as *Ἰόπλοκ' ἄγνα μελλιχόμειδες Ἀφροί*, 'Sainte Aphrô à la couronne de violettes et au sourire de miel'. In the *Iliad*, where the goddess frequently appears, the epithet *φιλομμειδής* alternates with *Διὸς θυγάτηρ*, 'daughter of Zeus', before *Ἀφροδίτη* at

²⁶ Compare *Hom. h.* 6.1–5 (Aphr. arrived at Cyprus in the *aphros*). There are variant versions of uncertain date and relation to Hesiod. *Orph. fr.* 189 and 260 Bernabé tell of two births of Aphr., one from the foam likewise formed around the genitals of Ouranos and another from the sperm of Zeus cast into the sea. The reference to Aphr. *Οὐρανία* in col. 21.5–7 of the Derveni papyrus may also relate to her (re-)birth, see Bernabé (2002: 118) and Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou (2006: 247). A fragment ascribed to a theogony by Epimenides of Crete has Aphr. descend from Kronos together with the Erinyes (as in Hes.) and the Moirai (DK 3.19); Johannes Lydus reports an ancient belief that Aphr. was born from the genitals of Kronos (*Mens.* 116, 20 Wünsch), which may tie in with an Orphic account relating the castration of the latter by Zeus (*Orph. fr.* 225 Bernabé): see Roscher s.v. Kronos §13, Mele (2001: 251–3). A plaque from the Heraion at Perachora near Corinth (*Perachora* I pl. 102 no. 183a, first half of the 7th century BC) has been thought to depict a female figure arising from what may be a genital sac, but this interpretation seems highly speculative.

²⁷ Since Hesiod establishes a connection both to *μειδήματα* and to *μήδεα*, it does not matter whether one reads *φιλομμειδής* or *φιλομμηδής* in our passage. See most recently Arnould (2009: 5–6), previously esp. Heubeck (1984: 265–7).

²⁸ Schwyzler 1.310 also adduces *Hom. ἀγάννιφος*, reflecting *-(σ)νιφ-.

verse-end; but it is difficult to identify historical or contextual reasons for this violation of formulaic economy.²⁹ In any case, *Διὸς θυγάτηρ* implies the Homeric genealogy of Aphrodite, and it may be that Hesiod is trying to establish *φιλομμεῖ/ηδής* as an alternative genealogical epithet: 'because she appeared from the genitals (of Ouranos)'.³⁰ Heubeck (1984: 265) rejected the idea that Hesiod's genealogy of Aphrodite is based on any such attempt to etymologize *φιλομμεῖ/ηδής*: for the story, according to Heubeck, is 'of the highest antiquity, perhaps of pre-Greek or ancient Near Eastern origin' ('uralt, vielleicht vorgriechischer oder altorientalischer Herkunft'). While the former hypothesis can be neither proved nor disproved, I am not aware of any Near Eastern model for the birth of Aphrodite from the genitals of Ouranos. The available Near Eastern parallels are (a) the descent of Inana/Ištar from the Sky-god, and (b) the castration of the Sky-god, with an appended aetiology. I would argue that Hesiod's account combines echoes of (a) and (b) with (c): a purely Greek interpretation—be it historically correct or not—of the epic epithet *φιλομμεῖδής* by means of *μήδεα* and *μειδήματα*.

As for Cyprus and Cythera, the places of cult: their mention is otherwise unusual in the *Theogony*, as Jacoby (1926: 164) criticized. It might be objected that the names of the islands are inextricably implicated in a series of etymological puns: *Ἀφροδίτη* => *ἄφρός* => *προσέκυρσε* *Κυθήροις* => *Κυθέρεια*.³¹ But one might go further still: Hesiod's version is clearly told from the perspective of the Greek mainland—first Cythera, then Cyprus—from which Kronos had cast the genitals of Ouranos (*ἀπ' ἡπείροιο*, *Th.* 189).³² I would therefore venture to compare the mention of these islands with the mention of

²⁹ Noted already by Parry (1971: 17). See Mureddu (1983: 79–82) and Janko (1981b: 254), who speaks of alternation 'in apparently random fashion'.

³⁰ Conversely, Riemschneider (1950: 15) argued that it must have been Homer who deliberately avoided the Hesiodic genealogy and his distasteful interpretation of *φιλομμεῖδής*: for it would be too barbaric to assume that Hesiod would have departed from Homer in this way.

³¹ *Κυθέρεια* may well derive from *Κύθηρα* (Frisk s.v. *Κυθέρεια*) despite *Κυθήριος* (*Il.* 10.268, 15.431); the feminine formation in *-εῖα* could regularly correspond to a masculine *-εύς* (see Ruijgh §§212, 300 n. 7) and is therefore neither necessarily 'artificial' nor 'late', as Cassio (2012: 417) has recently argued. Cassio also claims that *εὐστέφανος* *Κυθέρεια* was designed to supersede an established formula like *φιλομμεῖδής* *Ἀφροδίτη*. But the metrical implications of vocalic vs. consonantal *Anlaut* mean that these two phrases cannot be considered to be equivalent.

³² As noted by Lane Fox (2008: 282).

Mount Kanzura and the Nahr Ibrahim in the eastern comparanda. This is the aetiology of specifically Greek interest that the castration of the Sky-god has occasioned.

It seems possible, then, to interpret Hesiod's story as a combination of Greek aspects of Aphrodite (her established epithets and places of worship) with foreign elements: her descent from Ouranos (contrary to the Homeric version), and the aetiology that follows the castration of the Sky-god in the Myth of Succession. Such an adaptation to Greek interests is indeed what the Phoenician and Hurrian aetiologies (Nahr Ibrahim, Tigris) might lead us to expect. As Friedländer (1931: 256–60) argued in a different context—in response to Jacoby's Analytic criticism (see the following section)—the Aphrodite-episode is intelligible and coherent of itself. Even as the Hurro-Hittite sources became available to modern scholarship, Erbse (1964: 6) would accept only that Hesiod had at the most reworked a non-Greek castration-myth. Commenting on the birth of Aphrodite in her careful study of Astarte, Bonnet (1996: 148) similarly remarked: 'An inspiration based on Oriental motifs is therefore likely, but it is accompanied by an original use of these motifs in the framework of Greek mythology, which excludes a plain and simple process of borrowing.'³³ This is precisely the avenue of interpretation that I would like to pursue. For while I agree with those cautious assessments, it should be possible to achieve greater precision, considering the wealth of sources on Inana/Ištar and Aphrodite.

THE GODDESS IN THE PANTHEON

One must first consider Hesiod's description of the goddess in more general terms. Her province, according to Hesiod, is 'innocent palaver, smiles, and deceits / pleasant joys, love, and kindness' (*Th.* 205–6). Later Aphrodite gives birth by Ares to Phobos, Deimos, and Harmonia (*Th.* 933–7), which expresses no more than the trivial

³³ 'Une inspiration de motifs orientaux est donc vraisemblable, mais avec une utilisation originale de ceux-ci dans le cadre de la mythologie grecque, ce qui exclut un processus d'emprunt pur et simple.' Dornseiff (1937: 247) had already referred to the birth of Aphrodite from the severed genitals as a 'kecke etymologisch-aitiologische Weiterdichtung des Hesiod'.

dualism of Aphrodite and Ares. None of that bears any resemblance to the hyperbolic Sumero-Akkadian praises of Inana/Ištar, or to the dominant position of that goddess in the Mesopotamian pantheon. Hesiod had earlier assigned a potentially more significant role to Eros, ‘who overcomes the minds and sage counsel of all gods and men in their hearts’ (*Th.* 121–2), which is very reminiscent of the description of Aphrodite at the opening of the long *Homeric Hymn* devoted to her: ‘She who arouses sweet desire in gods / and overcomes the tribes of mortal men’ (*Hom. h.* 5.2–3). Elsewhere, Hera flatters Aphrodite in similar terms (*Il.* 14.198–9).³⁴ The implication is that gods and men alike are vulnerable to certain impulses. Hesiod does in some instances refer euphemistically to the sexual function of Aphrodite, where two beings beget another by her offices.³⁵ But the Myth of Succession in the *Theogony* is the prelude to the rise and supremacy of Zeus, and it is in this perspective that Aphrodite has her place, holding her *τιμή* and *μοῖρα* like all the others under his rule. The acute Analytic criticism of Jacoby (1926: 179), who considered the whole episode to be an interpolated hymn to Aphrodite, sensed this: ‘Aphrodite is not a goddess of the universe to him [sc. to the author of the hymn], at least not after he has introduced her into the context of the *Theogony* with deliberate skill’ (‘Aphrodite ist ihm nicht Allgöttin, mindestens nicht, nachdem er sie mit bewußter Kunst in den Zusammenhang der *Θε* eingeführt hat’).

Dissatisfied with the limited role that is assigned to her in the *Theogony*, certain critics have recently argued (without reference to Inana/Ištar) that Aphrodite somehow poses an implicit threat to Zeus because of the violent character of her birth and her generative power.³⁶ But the text does not, in fact, suggest that Aphrodite has an ulterior role in the Myth of Succession. Her name is indeed used in euphemisms for sex in (Hesiodic or pseudo-Hesiodic) catalogue

³⁴ πάντων τε θεῶν τ’ ἀνθρώπων / δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν (*Th.* 121–2), ἣ τε θεοῖσιν ἐπὶ γλυκύν ἔμερον ὥρσε / καὶ τ’ ἐδαμάσσατο φύλα καταβηγῶν ἀνθρώπων (*Hom. h.* 5.2–3), δός νύν μοι φιλότῃ καὶ ἔμερον, ᾧ τε σὺ πάντας / δαμνᾷ ἀθανάτους ἡδὲ θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους (*Il.* 14.198–9). Compare also Thgn. 1386–9.

³⁵ διὰ χρυσήν Ἀφροδίτην: *Th.* 822, 962, 1005, {1014,} Hes. fr. 23a.35, 172.4, 221.3 Merkelbach–West; *μιχθεῖσ’ ἐν φιλότῃ πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης*: *Th.* 980, fr. 253.3 M–W.

³⁶ In particular Jackson (2010: 154–5) and Yasumura (2011: 146–7). The readings proposed by Bonnafé (1985: 33–5) and Pironti (2007: 61–104) do not go quite so far but similarly emphasize the dangerous potential of Aphrodite.

poetry, including at the birth of Typhoeus (*Th.* 821), the final challenger of Zeus. But these are conventional phrases, indicating nothing more than the sexual mechanism of procreation. It is necessary for Hesiod to point out this mechanism because new gods can still be created without a partner (ὁὐ φιλότῃτι), as in the case of Athena and Hephaestus (*Th.* 924–9). The logical progression of the Myth of Succession demands that challengers be engendered, and Hesiod attributes no agency to Aphrodite. Her position might have been different if, as elsewhere in early epic, Aphrodite had somehow overpowered the other gods; but Hesiod ascribes this faculty only to Eros, who is created before Aphrodite and is later said to follow her after her birth. Yet his power is never realized, and we hear no more of him in the Myth of Succession. While Hesiod clearly establishes Eros as a prime element in the order of the universe, his important position never translates on the mythological level into a challenge against Zeus.³⁷

In the Akkadian hymn *Queen of Nippur* that was cited in the opening section of the present chapter, Ištar is said to have received her name, and thus her position as goddess of the heavens, ‘of old’ (*qadmiš*). Hesiod similarly speaks of the privileges that Aphrodite has held ἐξ ἀρχῆς. This is a key term: Hesiod introduced it in the proem and it recurs throughout the *Theogony*.³⁸ Here it perhaps serves to illustrate Aphrodite’s high age as an offspring of Ouranos, but also to restrict her influence to the province of sexuality: ‘she holds this lot since the beginning (and Zeus will later confirm it and it is not going to change).’ In the *Queen of Nippur*, however, the naming of Ištar ‘of old’ is encased by the typical hyperbolic praise that we have observed so often in the Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian corpora: Ištar is presented as a goddess of all but universal power. ‘No one but she is able . . .’, the hymn proclaims, before listing the areas of her all-encompassing influence: the heavens, the mountains and seas, kingship, judgement, and so on; later we are told, in a typical image, that Ištar ‘issues regulations for the great gods, like Anu, / every day the gods gather to her, the Anunnaki, to take council. The great Igigi

³⁷ Most (2013: 172–3) similarly notes the discrepancy between the cosmic significance of Eros and his subdued role in the *Theogony*.

³⁸ *θεῶν γένος αἰδοῖον πρῶτον κλείουσιν* (sc. the Muses) *αἰοιδῇ / ἐξ ἀρχῆς* (*Th.* 44–5), see further *Th.* 115, 156, 408, 425, 452, 512, and the parody by Ar. *Pax* 780.

always run / that (she) assign their portions and (they) receive their orders.³⁹ Ištar's power, as so often, is shown to be all but universal, comparable only to that of the Sky-god. Recently published fragments of an Old Babylonian Sumerian composition (*Inana and An*) even tell how Inana robbed An of his pre-eminence as Sky-god, just as she tried to take over the underworld in a much better-known myth.⁴⁰

So while there exist dense Near Eastern parallels both for the figure of Aphrodite *Oὐρανία* as Sky-goddess and for the concept of birth from the genitals of Ouranos within the Myth of Succession, Hesiod's actual characterization of Aphrodite as the offspring of Ouranos seems to owe nothing to the mighty figure of Inana/Ištar, spouse, daughter, and equal of An(u). In Mesopotamia this celestial aspect derived from the pre-historical identification of Inana/Ištar with the morning- and evening-star, the brightest in the sky. Illustrations are readily provided by the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns to Inana:

nam-diġir-zu ^dnanna ^dutu-gen₇ an ku₃-ge dalla e₃
izi-ġar-zu ub an-na zalag-ge kukku₂ zalag-ge-eš₂ ġar

Your divinity appears radiantly like Nanna (i.e. the moon) and Utu
(i.e. the sun) in the holy sky,⁴¹
your torch lights up the corners of heaven and brightens darkness.
(*Inana C*, 209–10)

nin me šar₂-ra u₄ dalla e₃-a
munus zi me-lim₄ gur₃-ru ki-aġ₂ an uraš-a

Mistress of the countless divine powers, light that emerges in radiance,
true woman clad in fearful gleam, beloved of An and Uraš.
(*Inana B*, 1–2)

[an-ta e₃-a-ra an-ta e₃-a-ra silim-ma ga]-na-ab-be₂-en
[nu-u₈-g]e₁₇ an-ta e₃-a-ra [silim]-ma ga-na-ab-be₂-en
[nin] gal an-na ^dinana-ra silim-ma ga-na-ab-be₂-en
izi-ġar ku₃ an-e si-a-ra

³⁹ *Queen of Nippur* cols. III 1–38 and IV 17–20, transl. after Lambert (*uš-te-šer uš-rat DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ GEN₇ ^da-nu / u₄-me-šam paḥ-ru-ši DINGIR.MEŠ ^da-nun-na-ki ma-la-kiš mil-ka / ra-bu-tu₂ ^di₂-gi₃-gi₃ il-ta-na-as-[u-mu] / a-na ud-du-u is-qi₂-šu₂-un ma-ḥar ter-ti-š[u₂-un*). Compare especially the OB Akkadian *Hymn to Ištar A*, 29–36, and the discussion of hyperbolic praise in the Sumerian and Akkadian sources (Chs. 1 and 2).

⁴⁰ Edition: van Dijk (1998), see also Zgoll (1997: 397–400) on *Inana B*, 86.

⁴¹ Compare the same observation by Pliny 2.8.36 (*ingens sidus appellatum Veneris . . . aemulum solis et lunae*).

sud-ra₂-aĝ₂ an-[n]a⁷-ra u₄-gen₇ zalag-ge-ra
 nin gal an-na ^dinana-ra silim-ma ga-na-ab-be₂-en

Let us say ['hail!'] to the one that emerges from the sky, that emerges
 from the sky,]

let us say 'hail!' to the great ruler that emerges from the sky,

let us say 'hail!' to the great lady of heaven, to Inana!

To the holy torch that fills the sky,

to the celestial gleam that is bright like the sun,

to the great lady of heaven Inana let us say 'hail'!

(*Iddin-Dagan* A, 1–6 after SRT 1)⁴²

In Greece, the realization that the morning- and evening-star are identical, and their association with Aphrodite, post-date the time of Hesiod, and his genealogy of the morning-star (*Th.* 381) is accordingly situated in a completely different context.⁴³ It seems that the celestial aspect of Inana/Ištar, and Astarte by extension, manifests itself in the *Theogony* only in Aphrodite's descent from the sky-god Ouranos. Unlike Inana/Ištar, she has no astral function and is accorded no pre-eminent role in the pantheon.⁴⁴ This is in keeping with the evidence from the Greek cults of Aphrodite *Οὐρανία*, to which no particularly celestial conception seems to have been associated.⁴⁵

Hesiod's etymology of the name of Aphrodite as born from the *aphros* later served as an exemplum to Socrates in his facetious

⁴² On this aspect of Inana/Ištar in Mesopotamia see Bruschweiler (1987: 160–8) and Koch-Westenholz (1995: 125–7), for Mitanni and Hatti see Miller (2004: 390–3).

⁴³ The sources are set out by Cumont (1935), *RE* s.v. Planeten 2031–2 (identity realized by the Pythagoreans, association with Aphrodite current since the 4th century BC). Near Eastern astronomy seems to have been instrumental (ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἑωσφόρος ἔσπερός τε ὦν αὐτὸς Ἀφροδίτης εἶναι σχεδὸν ἔχει λόγον καὶ μάλα Συρίῳ νομοθέτῃ πρέπον . . . , *Pl. Epin.* 987b). See also Knigge (1982: 157). Hesiod's mention of the abduction of Phaethon by Aphrodite (*Th.* 984–90) is unrelated to astronomical speculation: Diggle (1970: 11–15).

⁴⁴ The contrast between Hesiod and later depictions of Aphrodite in the tragedians as an irresistible force of nature, more powerful even than Zeus, is also notable: in one instance she is praised hyperbolically as ruling the 'lungs of Zeus', Διὸς τυραννεί πλευμόνων (*Soph. fr.* 941.15 Radt), compare also Κύπριδος <δ'> οὐκ ἀμελεί<ν>, θεσμός ὅδ' εὐφρων· δύναιται γὰρ Διὸς ἄγχιστα σὺν Ἥρᾳ (*Aesch. Supp.* 1034–5), τῶν μὲν ἄλλων δαιμόνων ἔχει κράτος (sc. Zeus), / κείνης δὲ (sc. of Aphrodite) δοῦλός ἐστι (*Eur. Tr.* 949–50). See Fröhder (1994: 261–8), Pattoni (2003), Bittrich (2005).

⁴⁵ 'Ourania donne l'impression d'être une appellation générique, importante puisque réservée à la déesse (sc. to Aphrodite), mais qui ne se concentre pas dans des prérogatives définies et dessine bien plus une image globale d'Aphrodite' (Pirenne-Delforge 1994: 438).

account of name-explanation in the poets (Cra. 406d). The *Theogony* is replete with such creative etymologies, which Arnould (2009) has recently surveyed, and Hesiod was not alone in realizing the speculative potential of the name of Aphrodite.⁴⁶ And we have seen that the same strategy was employed by the authors of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns to Inana and Ištar. If Hesiod's conception of Aphrodite is indeed an echo of celestial Inana/Ištar, he may have tried to respond to that influential figure with a specifically Greek explanation of *Oὐρανία* in the context of his *Theogony*. This leads to an important question: if celestial Inana/Ištar did indeed stand behind Hesiod's Aphrodite, was he himself aware of this model?

The immediate problem is that Hesiod does not explicitly link the descent of Aphrodite from Ouranos to her name *Oὐρανία*, a name elsewhere applied to one of the Muses (*Th.* 78) and to an Oceanid (*Th.* 350, also fr. 305). This is strange, given that he does provide etymologies for Aphrodite's Greek names and epithets. Discussing the translation and adaptation of hymnic poetry within the Near East, we noted the case of a Hittite hymn to the Sun-god (Chapter 3). Some versions of unclear purpose contained evident Mesopotamian predication, but one adaptation that was addressed to the Anatolian Sun-goddess purged all predication that clearly betrayed their Sumerian origin, while retaining others that were sufficiently general to suit not only the Sumerian Sun-god but also the Anatolian Sun-goddess. So if the epithet *Oὐρανία* had a Near Eastern connotation in connection with Aphrodite already in the time of Hesiod, as it later did for Herodotus, it may similarly have been purged, while only the framework of the Myth of Succession remained and the emphasis was placed on Aphrodite's Greek names and epithets. The fact that the Sun was worshipped in Anatolia as well as in Mesopotamia, albeit under different forms, no doubt facilitated the transfer of epithets and predication from Sumerian Utu. One might argue by analogy that, in the case of Aphrodite and Inana/Ištar, a general similarity between female goddesses of sexual love was perceived, which allowed a particular concept—the descent from the Sky, without a mother—to be

⁴⁶ Compare e.g. τὰ μῶρα γὰρ πάντ' ἐστὶν Ἀφροδίτῃ βροτοῖς, / καὶ τοῦνομ' ὀρθῶς ἀφροσύνης ἄρχει θεᾶς (Eur. *Tr.* 989–90), Κύπρις γὰρ οὐ φορητός (i.e. as if *a-phoretos*), ἦν πολλὴ ῥύη (Eur. *Hipp.* 443) with Πολλὴ μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοῦκ ἀνώνυμος / θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις, οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω (*Hipp.* 1–2). See Bernabé (1992: 41–2), Tsitsibakou-Vasalos (2003), Pironti (2005).

transferred. The lack of intermediary versions makes this suggestion impossible to prove, of course, but at least there is a conceptual precedent.

Alternatively, the lack of the epithet *Oὐρανία*, which is crucial to this particular episode if my interpretation is correct, could indicate that Hesiod was telling an inherited tale that he did not fully understand himself. This raises the question: was Hesiod the first to tell such a story?⁴⁷ The Christian writer Clement of Alexandria reports a Cypriot rite in which the initiates receive a grain of salt and a phallus in remembrance of the birth of Aphrodite (*Protr.* II 14).⁴⁸ This appears to offer a historical perspective on the episode in the *Theogony*, but even if Clement were to be believed, the rite may itself have been influenced by Hesiod, as Pirenne-Delforge (1994: 343) notes. According to the archaeological evidence, Phoenician settlement began on Cyprus in the latter half of the 10th century and, as was mentioned earlier, a cult of Aphrodite *Oὐρανία* is indirectly attested in Kition, re-founded in the late 9th century BC by Phoenicians from Tyrus; on Cythera, no evidence of a Phoenician presence has been found.⁴⁹ As for Cypriot contacts with Greece, from the 10th to the late 8th centuries BC, it seems that 'Paphos, Amathus, Kition, and Salamis acted as the principal staging posts for the Euboians as they travelled eastwards... These sites were also ports of call for the Phoenicians, especially those from Tyre, as they travelled from the Levant to the Dodecanese' (Reyes 1994: 139). While Hesiod claims to be inexperienced in sea-travel, he did once go over to Euboea to win a contest there (*Op.* 649–57). Might Euboean voyagers have served as an intermediary via Cyprus at some point in those early centuries of the 1st millennium BC?⁵⁰ López-Ruiz (2010: 199) has

⁴⁷ 'Wenn Hesiod in einer Tradition stand, so haben wir uns zu fragen, wo und wie diese Tradition gelebt hat. Dabei sind wir uns bewußt, daß wir im Grunde nichts wissen können' (Hölscher 1953: 410).

⁴⁸ Kronos throwing the genitals of Ouranos into the sea is an 'eindeutig ritueller Gestus' according to Burkert (1997: 84).

⁴⁹ Broodbank (2013: 487), Lipiński (2004: 42–51), Huxley (1988: 71).

⁵⁰ Thus I would broadly follow Lane Fox (2008: 283) in locating the formation of the Aphrodite-episode in the 11th to 8th centuries BC, although he assigns a larger role in its invention to the Graeco-Phoenician milieu on Cyprus. A similar view was expressed by Bonnet and Pirenne-Delforge (1999: 264), and West (1997: 626–7). Lane Fox's general account of eastern elements in the *Theogony* is based on the intriguing observation that Hurrian songs, including some that probably belonged to the Kingship in Heaven-cycle, were performed in a ritual context at Mount Hazzi

indeed suggested that anonymous wanderers, such as craftsmen, could have served as vectors of cosmogonic stories.⁵¹

Such an (admittedly speculative) explanation would, in my opinion, best account for the specific way in which Hesiod presents Aphrodite. I suggest that his story is on the one hand dependent on the (North Syrian?) Myth of Succession in general and the celestial conception of Inana/Ištar in particular. We saw that the castration-episode provided an opportunity to the poets to establish aetiologies of local (Hurrian, Levantine, Greek) interest. On the other hand, Hesiod portrays Aphrodite as a subordinate figure, in keeping with his aims in the *Theogony*. Unlike in other early hexameter poetry, no features that might be seen to rival or even equal the authority of Zeus, in particular the all-conquering power of desire, are attributed to Aphrodite. In this respect her character clearly differs from that of Inana/Ištar. Her Ouranian brilliance is dimmed, either because Hesiod did not wish to exalt Aphrodite to such an extent or because this aspect was a priori limited to the Mesopotamian and perhaps Levantine regions where Inana/Ištar's celestial importance, and hence her dominant position in the pantheon, was established and understood.

Aphrodite's genesis in the *Theogony* is only a subsidiary episode in the Myth of Succession. It may be possible to pursue this avenue further, for just as Hesiod seems to subordinate Aphrodite to Zeus, his favourite, the deposed Kronos is conspicuously relegated from the story. This is quite in contrast to the Hurro-Hittite version, where Kumarbi remains a keen plotter against his successor; but it has been compared to the situation of the god El in relation to Baal in Ugaritic mythology.⁵² Thus it may eventually be possible to integrate the Aphrodite-episode into a more general interpretation of Zeus and the Myth of Succession in the light of the Near Eastern material.⁵³

(Mount Kasion), where Euboeans may have picked them up; but note that it is only a possibility, not a fact, that these rituals for Mount Hazzi were indeed performed there: see Rutherford (2001a: 605–6), Lorenz and Rieken (2010: 229).

⁵¹ Note in this context the fragment of an ivory rod, inscribed with a Levantine variety of cuneiform, that was recently found in Mycenaean Tiryns: it served, according to Dietrich and Loretz (2011), in a form of oracular enquiry and was probably produced on Cyprus or by a Cypriot-trained scribe in Tiryns.

⁵² See López-Ruiz (2010: 115–29). Despite her emphasis on possibly comparable Ugaritic figures (El ~ Kronos, Baal ~ Zeus), the Hurro-Hittite version remains the principal comparandum for the Myth of Succession.

⁵³ López-Ruiz (2012: 39–43) now argues that Hesiod's original contribution was to introduce, in the proem of the *Theogony*, 'the figure of the author of cosmogonies as

The present chapter started from a consideration of the names of Inana and Ištar in Sumerian and Akkadian religious literature. The method by which the authors of those texts tried to describe the nature of the goddess is in my view entirely comparable to the etymological speculation of Hesiod. In his characterization of Aphrodite in the *Theogony*, the established Greek epithet *φιλομμει/ηδής* serves as an aetiological link to the first episode of the Myth of Succession, and by extension to a myth that also appears in Hurro-Hittite and possibly Phoenician sources. The etymological speculation in which the ancients engaged can help us to assess the degree of originality of the Greek version: the underlying pun on *φιλομμει/ηδής* and *μήδεα/μειδήματα* works only in Greek. Hence it is no surprise that while individual elements of the episode can be paralleled in Near Eastern sources (Inana/Ištar descended from the Sky; castration of the Sky and appended aetiology), Hesiod's account as a whole (birth of Aphrodite *φιλομμει/ηδής* from the Sky's *μήδεα*) cannot be derived simply from foreign models. The word-play requires Greek input.⁵⁴ The lack of intermediary versions prevents us from determining the extent to which Hesiod himself was responsible for this contribution. Some elements of his version—in particular the lack of the epithet *Οὐρανία*, and the imperfect realization of the full theological implications of this celestial position when compared to Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and mythological tales—could suggest that Hesiod is working at some considerable remove from any Near Eastern sources. But the interpretation proposed in these pages, if correct, may at least help us to understand the combination of essential ingredients that make up his version.

part of the poem itself'. The crucial problem remains that we lack intermediary versions.

⁵⁴ The importance of specifically Greek etymologies in this connection has been pointed out briefly by West (1997: 627), commenting on *aphros*/Aphrodite. It may also be worth noting that Fraenkel (1922: 23–5) used puns on Roman names to determine the originality (vis-à-vis Greek models) of passages in the comedies of Plautus.

Sumerian and Hittite Notes on *Iliad* 1.62–4

The final chapter of this study takes as its starting-point a recently published Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn and prayer to the Sun-god Utu (*Utu the hero*). In the preceding discussion of the Hittite sources (Chapter 3), it was noted that this hymn and prayer served as a model to a number of Hittite compositions. Thus it was possible to observe at least some steps in the process of translation and adaptation of Mesopotamian religious poetry among the Hittites. The following discussion will take up the thread again, concentrating on a particular passage in the prayer that was repeatedly adapted in a set of Hittite compositions, and considering the possibility that another reflection can be perceived in a short but important episode at the opening of the *Iliad*.

I have selected this topic for three reasons. The first is that the available sources allow us to study the process of translation and adaptation in some detail. It can be shown that the model text was translated and adapted outside Mesopotamia after the Old Babylonian period,¹ and we can partly understand how the passage in question was subsequently transformed. When comparing an episode from a text like the *Iliad* to a Near Eastern source, many scholars would tend to focus on the (invariably ‘striking’) similarities, whereupon their critics would object that (invariably ‘significant’) differences also exist. This situation need not lead to an impasse, as I hope to show, for the context sometimes enables us to understand both the similarities and the differences that naturally result from any process of adaptation.

¹ Röllig (2001: 312–13) has rightly warned that texts that cannot be shown to have survived the Old Babylonian period can only be of limited use in comparisons with Greek material.

The second reason is that in this particular case we happen to possess independent historical evidence that can help to explain how the texts in question might have come to be related. In other words: we are not left with a blank sheet in between the extant literary sources. The relevant cuneiform documentation, much of which has been made accessible only by very recent scholarship and is not yet widely known, allows us to get as far as western Anatolia in the late 2nd millennium. Any conclusions will ultimately remain speculative in the absence of written evidence from the Greek side, but the available sources allow us to approach the possible region and time of contact much more closely than usual. Even if the result is not entirely conclusive, the following pages aim at least to gather the relevant primary sources, which are currently greatly dispersed, and to analyse them both in their own contexts and in connection with each other.

Finally, I have selected this particular topic because the material in question has never been the subject of a detailed comparative study, as far as I am aware. I will begin with a very brief presentation of the relevant Sumerian, Hittite, and Greek passages, followed by a detailed comparative discussion.

THE TEXTS

Das Unglück geschah auch mir allein,
Die Sonne, sie scheint allgemein.

(Friedrich Rückert, *Kindertodtenlieder*, no. 370)

The Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn *Utu the hero* (main text: H 150 from Meturan, ed. Cavigneaux 2009: 7–12) opens with conventional praises of the Sun-god. In the prayer at the end of the hymn, the supplicant seems to be contemplating the prospect of death, perhaps as the result of some disease. The supplicant attributes his suffering to the wrath of his personal god, and in order to establish its causes, he wants to resort to divination, the province of the Sun-god Utu. The supplicant prays:

- (1) diġir-ġa₂ niġ₂ gig-ga-a-ni ħa-ma-be₂
 ša₃-bi ġal₂ BA-ra(var.: ħa-ma)-ab-taka₄-a niġ₂-nam-ma-a ga-zu
 maš₂-šu-gid₂-gid₂ ^dutu-kam uzu-kam ħa-ma-be₂

ša₃-bi (ġal₂ ħa-ma-ab-taka₄ niġ₂-nam-ma-a ga-zu)

ensi¹ x x x-a-bi ħa-ma-be₂

ša₃-bi (ġal₂ ħa-ma-ab-taka₄ niġ₂-nam-ma-a ga-zu)

Let my god tell me what offended him,

let him reveal its meaning to me, may I know everything!

Let the diviner tell me what Utu says, what the (liver) omen says,

let him reveal its meaning to me, may I know everything!

Let the dream-interpreter tell me its . . . ,

let him/her reveal its meaning to me, may I know everything!

(*Utu the hero*, 53–5)

In Chapter 3, on Hittite hymns, it has been explained that this Sumerian composition served as a model to large sections of an important corpus of Hittite hymns to the Sun-god, *CTH* 372–4. And indeed it is obvious that a corresponding passage in *CTH* 372–4 (quoted here in the Middle Hittite prayer of Kantuzzili, *CTH* 373) follows the ultimate (though probably not direct)² Sumerian model closely:

(2) [ki-nu-n]a-mu-za am-me-el DINGIR-IA ŠA₃-ŠU ZI-ŠU ħu-u-ma-an-te-et kar-di-it ki-i-nu-ud-du nu-mu wa-aš-du-ul-mi-it [te-e-ed]-du ne-za-an ga-ne₂-eš-mi na-aš-šu-mu DINGIR-IA za-aš-ħe₂-ia me-e-ma-u₂ nu-mu-za DINGIR-IA ŠA₃-ŠU ki-nu-ud-du [nu-mu wa-aš-d]u-ul-mi-it te-e-ed-du ne-za-an ga-ne₂-eš-mi na-aš-ma-mu ^{munus}ENSI me-e-ma-u₂ [na-aš-ma-mu Š]A ^dUTU ^{lu2}AZU IŠ-TU ^{uz}NIG₂.GIG me-e-ma-u₂ nu-mu-za DINGIR-IA ħu-u-ma-an-te-et kar-di-it [ŠA₃-ŠU ZI-ŠU] ʾki-i-nu-ud-duʾ nu-mu wa-aš-du-ul-mi-it te-e-ed-du ne-za-an ga-ne₂-eš-mi

But let my god now reveal his innermost soul to me with all his heart, and let him tell me my sins so that I may know them. Let my god either tell me in a dream—let my god reveal his soul to me, and let him tell me my sins so that I may know them—or let a female dream-interpreter tell me, or let a diviner of the Sun-god tell me (reading) from a liver. Let my god reveal his innermost soul to me with all his heart, and let him tell me my sins so that I may know them. (*CTH* 373 = *KUB* 30.10 obv. 24'–28')

Compared to the Sumerian version, the two basic alternatives—divination from a liver-omen, or dream-interpretation—remain the

² Philological points arising from the comparison with the Sumerian original are discussed by Metcalf (2011). I plan to revisit in a separate publication (in *ZA* 105, 2015) several details that are not relevant to the present chapter. The interpretation of the difficult Sumerian text presented here contains some improvements upon the versions given by Cavigneaux (2009) and Metcalf (2011).

same. The redundant syntax of the Hittite version ('Let my god reveal his innermost soul to me, and let him tell me my sins so that I may know them') evidently imitates the Sumerian refrain, 'Let him reveal its meaning to me, may I know everything!', in combination with the phrase 'Let my god tell me what offended him'. The main difference lies in the syntactical arrangement of the plea: in the Sumerian version, the supplicant wishes to understand the 'meaning' (ša₃) of the offence, whereas the Hittite version postpones the reference to the 'sins' and the Sumerogram ŠA₃ must therefore be understood as the 'soul' of the personal god that is to be revealed. This is a minor discrepancy; what matters to the argument of the present chapter is that the substance of the supplicant's request for information about his offence remains intact.

It has further been explained in Chapter 3 that the influence of *Utu the hero*, having undergone certain necessary transformations, can also be felt in a hymn of the Hittite king Mursili II (late 14th century BC) to the Anatolian Sun-goddess of Arinna. That hymn of Mursili in fact belongs to a corpus of so-called plague prayers, composed in a time when the Hittites were afflicted by a debilitating disease.³ This hymn of Mursili to the Sun-goddess adapted the passage thus:

(3) *nu DINGIR.MEŠ ku-it wa-aš-du-ul uš-ka-at-te-ni nu na-aš-šu*
 [(DINGIR.MEŠ-ni-ia-an-za u₂-ed-du)] *na-at me-e-ma-a-u₂ na-aš-ma-*
at ^{munus.meš}U.GI ^{lu₂.meš}AZ[(U ^{lu₂.meš}MUŠEN.DU₃ *me-mi-ia-an-du na-*
aš-ma-at)] *za-aš-ḥe₂-az DUMU.LU₂.U₁₉.LU u₂-wa-an-du*

Gods, whatever sin you perceive, let either a man of god come and declare it, or let the old women, the diviners, the augurs declare it, or let people see it in a dream. (CTH 376.IA = KUB 24.4+, obv. 10'–12')⁴

Another, perhaps later plague-prayer of Mursili adapts the same phrase as follows:

(4) [*nam-ma*] *ma-a-an ta-me-e-ta-az-zi-ia ku-e-ez-qa ud-da-a-na-az*
ak-ki-iš-ki-i-it-ta-[(r)]i [(na-at-za-ka)]n₂ na-aš-šu te-eš-ḥi-it u₂-wa-al-
lu na-aš-ma-at a-ri-ia-še-eš-na-az [ḥa-an-da-i(a-a)]t-ta-ru na-aš-ma-at
^{lu₂}DINGIR^{LIM}-ni-an-za-ma *me-ma-a-u₂ na-aš-ma* ^{⌈(A-NA)⌋} ^{⌈(lu₂.}

³ See Singer (2002: 47–9) on the corpus and its context.

⁴ This witness in fact appears to be a Middle Hittite precursor; the restorations in round brackets within square brackets come from the corresponding section in Mursili's hymn CTH 376.II.A = KUB 24.3 col. II 19'–22' + KBo 51.18b obv. 26'–29' (where the verbal predicate of the last clause is singular: *a-uš-du*, 'let a man see it').

^{mes}SANGA ku-it) ħu-(u-ma-an-d)]a-a-aš wa-tar-na-aḫ-ħu-un na-at-ša-ma-aš šu-up-pa-ia še-e[(š-ki-iš-kan₂-zi)]

Further, if people are dying for some other reason, let me see it in a dream or let it be determined by an oracle,⁵ or let a man of god declare it; or the priests, since I have instructed all of them, shall sleep in a sacred way. (CTH 378.II A = KUB 14.8 rev. 41'–44')⁶

While the similarity between the three Hittite passages (2, 3, 4) has of course long been recognized,⁷ the recently discovered Sumerian version (1) puts us in a better position to understand, at least in part, the processes of translation and adaptation. At the beginning stands the Sumerian prayer of a (diseased?) supplicant who wishes to establish the cause of his suffering. Unsurprisingly, the supplicant suggests either dream-interpretation or a liver-omen as a possible means of communication via the Sun-god: these are the usual provinces of Utu in Mesopotamian divination,⁸ and these two alternatives have also survived in subsequent Hittite versions. Like the Sumerian prayer (1), the first preserved Hittite version (2) is uttered by a suffering mortal (Kantuzzili) and follows the ultimate model closely, even to the point of attempting to imitate the Sumerian refrain. Mursili's prayer to the Sun-goddess (3) does away with that but retains the two basic choices (the ^{lu2}AZU, presumably again for the liver-omen as in 2; or dream-interpretation) and extends the catalogue by two well-known Hittite figures, the augurs (^{lu2.mes}MUŠEN.DU₃) and the old women (^{munus.mes}ŠU.GI), who were responsible for augury and a kind of lot-oracle respectively: both are established Anatolian practices.⁹ The

⁵ This term (*ariyašeššar*) would refer primarily to extispicy, according to Haas (2008: 19).

⁶ Restorations in round brackets within square brackets after parallel versions CTH 378.II.B = KUB 14.11 col. IV 11'–17' and CTH 378.II.C = KUB 14.10 col. IV 8'–14'. For minor variants see Mouton (2007: 121–2). Compare also the earlier fragmentary passage KUB 14.8 obv. 2'–3', as restored by Singer (2002: 58).

⁷ See e.g. Kammenhuber (1976: 16, 19–20), Mouton (2007: 30), de Roos (2007: 20–1), Haas (2008: 126).

⁸ See Steinkeller (2005: 34–7), *RIA* s.v. Sonnengott A.I §5. Compare, as an expression of despair, 'The omen of the diviner and dream priest does not explain my condition' (*Ludlul* I 52 = *BWL* p. 32, with Lambert's note ad loc.).

⁹ See Archi (1975), Hazenbos (2007), Haas (2008: 19–22, 27–45), *RIA* s.v. Omina und Orakel A. §12, Orakel B. §2.2.1, 2.3. It might be relevant that the observation of bird-flight seems so far to be unattested in Old Babylonian Sumerian sources. The earliest Mesopotamian example is considered to be BM 113915 (ed. Weisberg 1969–70), an OB Akkadian forerunner to a mostly unedited section of the omen-series *Šumma alu* (see Freedman 1998: 13; Leichty and Kienast 2003), but these omina are

‘man of god’ (DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-*) whom Mursili also introduces belongs to another, less well-attested type of functionary in divination, described by Haas (2008: 7–8) as a divinely inspired individual who speaks on behalf of a deity. Crucially, passage (3) is no longer a prayer of a single suffering individual like (1, 2). Instead it is uttered in the context of a plague that has ravaged the land of Hatti, and whose religious cause the king seeks to determine. The final passage (4) comes from another plague-prayer of Mursili, where another transformation has taken place. This prayer is not addressed to the Sun-god(dess), as were the versions of Kantuzzili (2) and Mursili’s prayer to the Sun-goddess of Arinna (3), but to the Storm-god. Here the augurs and the old women have disappeared; instead, the priests (^{lu2.meš}SANGA) have been instructed to establish the cause of the plague by ‘sleeping in a sacred way’—that is, by the method of incubation that is well established in ancient Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and beyond.¹⁰ By this point the passage has undergone so many transformations—from a prayer about personal suffering (1, 2) to a royal prayer on a plague in the land (3, 4), from the Sumerian Sun-god Utu (1) to the Anatolian Storm-god (4) via the Sun-goddess of Arinna (3)—that the connection to the ultimate model would be hard to perceive, were it not for the intermediary versions. The elements that remain present throughout are the general context (a supplicant seeking to establish the cause of suffering/disease, which is attributed to divine wrath) and the basic alternatives presented by the supplicant in the Sumerian version (dream-interpretation or liver omen).

It is difficult in this context not to think of the words of Achilles in the assembly at the opening of the *Iliad*, at a time when the Greeks are afflicted by a plague sent by Apollo:

ἀλλ’ ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερά,
ἢ καὶ ὄνειροπόλον, καὶ γάρ τ’ ὄναρ ἐκ Διὸς ἐστίν,
ὅς κ’ εἴποι ὅ τι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων

‘But come, let us ask some diviner or priest,
or even a dream-interpreter, for dreams too are from Zeus,
who might tell us why Phoebus Apollo has become so enraged.’
(*Il.* 1.62–4)

based on many different kinds of general animal behaviour (including nesting, hunting, fighting), not on a systematic observation of the birds’ flight-paths.

¹⁰ See Zgoll (2002), Mouton (2003), Zgoll (2006: 309–51), Haas (2008: 158–9). For ancient Greece see Stengel §50, for an 11th-century example from Buddhist Japan see Sieffert (1959: 314–15).

This is a proposal in the Greek assembly, not a prayer to the god himself. Yet the context, structure, and content are remarkably similar to the Hittite passages that have just been cited.¹¹ Before returning to the Hittite material for a more detailed comparison, it may be remarked briefly that in the context of the passage, the *μάντις* would refer to a diviner like Calchas who accompanies the Greek army, while the *ἱερεὺς* would presumably mean a local priest of Apollo in the Troad. The term *ὄνειροπόλος* ('dream-interpreter') otherwise occurs only once in Homer (*Il.* 5.149), and the relation between these three functionaries seems to have been debated in antiquity. Zenodotus athetized verse 63, apparently because the meaning he presumed for *ὄνειροπόλος*, taken as an interpreter of other people's (not one's own) dreams, would not agree with the context: for no one has had any dream for an interpreter to explain.¹² Zenodotus might also have been encouraged by the fact that the *μάντις* and the *ἱερεὺς*, but not the *ὄνειροπόλος*, are mentioned together at *Iliad* 24.221. The scholia further record a debate among the grammarians on whether the three functionaries are distinct or whether the *ἱερεὺς* and the *ὄνειροπόλος* are in fact sub-categories of the *μάντις* ('let us ask a diviner: a priest or a dream-interpreter').¹³ This may not have been the only instance in early epic where a diviner was called on to explain the wrath of a god,¹⁴ and yet the proposal of Achilles has created difficulties for ancient and modern exegetes of Homer. The details will be discussed in the course of the present chapter, but a cursory

¹¹ Although these verses have already been compared by some to the plague-prayers of Mursili (or to the prayer of Kantuzzili, 2), none of the past scholarship known to me goes into any detail. I have seen Oppenheim (1956: 199), Kessels (1973: 41–2 n. 3), West (1997: 47–8), Pulleyn (2000: 142–3), Bachvarova (2005: 140 n. 16), Haas (2006: 254), Mouton (2007: 31 n. 5), West (2011a: 84). Since the keystone—i.e. the Sumerian original (1)—has only recently been identified (Metcalf 2011), and since other relevant research has also appeared in the past few years, a new look at the available material is warranted in any case.

¹² Thus Nickau (1977: 241), compare Duentzer (1848: 178), West (2011a: 84).

¹³ Eust. 48.7 ad loc. adduces *Od.* 24.246: *οὐ φυτόν* (general term), *οὐ συκῇ*, *οὐκ ἄμπελος*, *οὐ μὲν ἐλαίῃ* . . . (particular terms), compare perhaps also *Od.* 1.202 (*οὔτε τι μάντις ἐὼν οὔτ' οἰωνῶν σάφα εἰδώς*).

¹⁴ Calchas is said to have told the Greeks at Aulis of the wrath of Artemis in the lost *Cypria* (arg. 8 West). It has been supposed that Calchas may have also warned of the wrath of Athena in the lost *Nostoi*: see Stockinger (1959: 93), compare also West (2013a: 236). Teiresias, speaking to Odysseus in the underworld (*Od.* 11.100–37), mentions the wrath of Poseidon and its cause, but here the diviner looks to the future, charting the difficult return of Odysseus, not to the past (compare *Od.* 10.539–40, 23.248–53).

glance suggests that the phrasing of Achilles' proposal as well as the functionaries are broadly paralleled in the prayers of Mursili (3, 4), and perhaps even in the ultimate Sumerian model (1).

PLAGUE-PRAYERS AND PLAGUE-RITUALS

The prayers of Mursili document the king's efforts to establish possible offences that may have caused the gods to send a punishing plague.¹⁵ As the relevant passages show (3, 4), the means to identify and atone for such offences was to communicate with the gods through divination. Mursili enumerates a string of experts in this area. Recent research has related the historically attested plague in the time of Mursili to a corpus of texts on divination experts from the land of Arzawa, who apparently had particular knowledge in dealing with plagues.¹⁶ Information gleaned from Hittite texts suggests that the term Arzawa refers to a region in the central part of western Anatolia. A recent handbook has defined it as:

an almost continuous swath of territory in western Anatolia, extending from the Troad region in the northwest, inland along the Hermos and Caicos river valleys, southwards along the western coast as far as the Maeander valley, and from the Maeander valley eastwards to the region southwest of the Salt Lake where Hittite buffer territory began.

(Bryce 2003: 40)

The widely held view that this part of western Anatolia was characterized by Luwian settlements has recently been challenged,¹⁷ but that is a secondary issue for the purposes of the present chapter. What matters is the fact that experts from a region in central western Anatolia appear to have been sought after in plague-struck Hatti in the later 2nd millennium BC. One such Arzawan plague-ritual,

¹⁵ See Singer (2002: 47–9), Haas (2008: 126–8) on the historical background.

¹⁶ See esp. Hutter (2001: 229–31), Hutter (2003: 235–7, 255), Bawanyeck (2005a: 295), Bawanyeck (2005b), Haas (2008: 50). Collins (2010: 58) links the presence of the Arzawan plague-rituals in Hattusa to the campaigns of Mursili in Arzawa, on which see Bryce (2003: 59–63). The ritual of Zarpiya (*CTH* 757) from Kizzuwatna (in the south-east of Anatolia) also appears to be concerned with plagues; on its relation to the Arzawan corpus see Hutter (2007).

¹⁷ Yakubovich (2010: 75–160), response by Hawkins (2013: 30–9).

preserved on several late Hittite copies, is of particular interest with respect to the *Iliad*. It begins as follows:

UM-MA ^{diš}ma-ad-du-na-a-ni ^{lu2}IGI.DU₃ (var.: ^{lu2}MUŠEN.DU₃) LU₂
^{uru}ar-za-u-wa ma-a-an-kan₂ ŠA₃ KARAŠ.ĦI.A UŠ₂-an ki-ša-ri UN.
 MEŠ-tar ʾANŠE.KUR.ʾRA.ĦI.A GU₄.ĦI.A KAL-ga-za ak-kiš-kat-ta-
 ri nu SISKUR₂ mu-u-ra-an-za i-ia-an-zi

Thus (speaks) Maddunani, the augur,¹⁸ the man from Arzawa: If a plague occurs in the midst of the army camp (and) the people, the horses, (and) the cattle are dying terribly, one performs the *muranza*-ritual.

(CTH 425.A = KUB 7.54 col. I 1–4 // KUB 57.114 col. II 3'–6'
 + KUB 55.9 3'–6')¹⁹

According to Bawanypeck (2005a: 252–3), this fragmentarily preserved ritual displays some unique features compared to others from the Arzawa-group, among them the qualification by the Luwian term *muranza* (of unknown meaning).²⁰ Whereas the other Arzawan plague-rituals contain a scapegoat ritual and invocations to the deity, this one does not. Instead the ritual prescribes measures of purification and observation of favourable birds, which implies that the experts had not yet established the cause of the disease and the identity of the angered deity. The preserved section of this ritual, Bawanypeck argues, could thus describe the initial stage of the experts' work (establishing the cause of the plague by means of augury).²¹ A scapegoat ritual would ensue at the second stage, which is possibly introduced by the phrase, 'And the old man (^{lu2}ŠU.GI) and the augur (^{lu2}MUŠEN.DU₃) begin to carry out the ritual'. It seems, then, that this was a ritual carried out by an Arzawan augur in order to establish the causes of some divine wrath, to which a plague in the (Hittite) army was attributed.

¹⁸ ^{lu2}IGI.DU₃ is probably a purely orthographic contamination of two terms for 'augur', ^{lu2}IGI.MUŠEN and ^{lu2}MUŠEN.DU₃, see Archi (1975: 129–30).

¹⁹ Edition: Bawanypeck (2005a: 126–36).

²⁰ On the language of the Arzawan rituals see Yakubovich (2010: 100–4) and Melchert (2013: 170–2). According to the latter, the apparent paucity of Luwianisms in these rituals shows that they were composed in Hattusa based on an 'indirect transmission' of actual Arzawan rituals; but if this fact is even significant, could it not also be explained as the result of a series of redactions, as described by Christiansen (2006: 309–29) for ritual texts?

²¹ See now also Bawanypeck (2013: 165, 172).

What of the ‘old man’ who is mentioned here in combination with the augur? Haas (2008: 50) has suggested that the ‘old man’ in this ritual refers to the ‘man of god’ (^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-*), who was tasked with identifying the offence in the prayers of Mursili (3, 4). Haas compares a passage in a prayer of Muwatalli II, the successor of Mursili, in which the king is again seeking to identify a past offence and an old man indeed seems to have a similar function as the ‘man of god’ in the prayers of Mursili:

[U₂-UL-*ma-a*]t-mu šal-li-iš ^{lu2}ŠU.GI me-ma-i nu-mu ʾDINGIR¹ ^{LIM}
ku-u-un me-mi-an te-eš-ḫi-it par₂-ku-nu-ut

But what the great old man can[not] declare to me, clarify that matter to me, O god, in a dream. (CTH 382 = KBo 11.1 obv. 42)

It may even be true that this passage is ‘a final, but much more primitive rehash’ (‘ein letzter, aber sehr viel primitiverer Aufguß’, Kammenhuber 1976: 24) of the series of requests by Kantuzzili and Mursili (2, 3, 4). The suggestion that the function of the old man (^{lu2}ŠU.GI) in the Arzawan ritual might be to identify the offence, like a ‘man of god’ (^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-*), is certainly attractive. Alternatively, the old man might be compared to the old women (^{munus}.meš³ŠU.GI) who are mentioned in one of the prayers of Mursili (3) as a possible means of communication and are in fact attested as cooperating with augurs.²² In any case, the practices described in this Arzawan ritual against the plague are not inconsistent with the task imposed on divination experts by Mursili: to establish the cause of the god’s anger during a plague.

One further aspect of the plague-rituals recorded at Hattusa calls for discussion. The plague-ritual of Dandanku (CTH 425.A), which is recorded on the same tablet (KUB 7.54) as the ritual of Maddunani and hence probably belongs to the same group of Arzawan plague-rituals, mentions what seems to be a relevant element in the elimination of the plague in the army. On the third day of the ritual, all evils that have struck the army are imposed on a donkey, who is to be

²² Such as in the late Hittite ritual of the augur Huwarlu (CTH 398): ‘Nun sprechen der Augur und die Alte folgendermaßen: “Siehe, die Götter haben uns vom Himmel die Herolde geschickt. Geht, stoßt die unheilvolle Angelegenheit aus dem Palast heraus! Geht, löscht die schrecklichen Vögel aus! Und wie diese Samen erlöschen, sollen auch die unheiligen Worte und die schrecklichen Vögel ebenso erlöschen!”’ (Bawanypeck 2005a: 23–5, see also 187 and 285).

driven away like a scapegoat into the enemy land. Then the instructions continue:

EGIR-an-da-ma-kan₂ ^{giš}PAN ḥu-u-it-ti-ia-an-zi nu-kan₂ ^{gi}U₂.TAG.GA (var.: ^{gi}GAG.U₂.TA[G]) ti-ia-an-zi ^{gi}U₂.TAG.GA.ḪI.A-ma pe₂-ra-an kat-ta iš-ḥu-u-wa-i nu me-ma-i DINGIR^{LUM}-wa KUR ^{lu2}KUR₂ ke-e-
ez-za IŠ-TU ^{gi}U₂.TAG.GA ši-ia-eš-ke

I-NA KUR ^{uru}ḪAT-TI-ma-wa ku-wa-pi₂ u₂-wa-a-ši nu-wa-tak₂-kan₂ ^{kuš}MA₂.URU.URU₆ iš-tap-pa-an-za e-eš-du ^{giš}PAN-ma-wa-tak₂-kan₂ ar-ḫa tar-na-a-an e-eš-du na-at ar-ḫa u₂-wa-an-zi

But then one draws a bow and puts an arrow in place. (The other) arrows he (Dandanku) scatters before him and says: ‘God, keep shooting hence at the enemy land with arrows!’

But when you come into the land of Hatti, let the quiver remain closed for you, let the bow be loosened for you!’ And one goes away. (CTH 425.A = KUB 7.54 col. III 19’–27’ // KUB 54.65+ col. II 21’–23’)

The invocation clearly implies that the deity in question, namely Yarri, a Luwian god of war and pestilence, was held responsible for introducing the plague into the land of Hatti with his arrows. As the same text says a few lines earlier: ‘You, Yarri, have wrought evil on this land and army camp.’ Yarri is now asked to keep his quiver shut and his bow loose in Hatti, and to shoot at the enemy land instead.²³

The Hittite plague-prayers, following but expanding the ultimate Sumerian model, mention a range of possible experts through which the deity might speak. Among them the ‘man of god’ (^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-niyant-), who is to ‘come and declare the sin’, is the most intriguing. Kloekhorst (2008: 764) sees some evidence for a verb *šuniye/a-, of which ^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-niyant- (= *šuniyant-)²⁴ would be a participle. A counterpart may be seen in Luwian ^{lu2}maš-šanāma/i-,²⁵ denoting in one isolated and riddling instance a participant in the Luwian šahḫan-festival for the goddess Huwassana

²³ Bawanypeck (2005a: 261) suggests that the arrows were seen as infected, comparing another Arzawan ritual, CTH 402 ed. A. Mouton (ed.), <hethiter.net/> CTH 402 (TRfr 01.08.2011) §24 (accessed 28 Feb. 2012), in which arrows absorb the impurity. See also Haas (2003: II 719–22), Christiansen (2006: 263–5). But it is important to note that the ritual of Dandanku clearly implies that Yarri shot the arrows into the army camp in the first place.

²⁴ Ultimately from Hitt. šiu-, šiuna-, ‘god’.

²⁵ Ultimately from Luw. maššan(i)-, ‘god’, on the derivation see Melchert (2003: 195), differently Starke (1990: 167). The comparison with Hitt. DINGIR.MEŠ-niyant-/šuniyant- was made by Laroche (1967: 176), see also CLL s.v. ^{LU}maššanāmi-, CHD s.vv. ^{LU}maššanāmi- and ^{LU}palašši-, Hutter (2003: 218, 258).

(KBo 14.89+ col. I 3'). The recently published hieroglyphic Luwian inscription TELL AHMAR 6 (later 10th–early 9th century BC, ed. Hawkins 2006) has produced a clearer attestation, where the ‘man of god’ (DEUS-*na-mi-i-sa*, §22) conveys to the king a divine injunction—‘Seat the Storm-god of the Army!’—which the king duly obeys. This, together with a comparable attestation in a damaged context (TELL AHMAR 5, §§11–15, see Hawkins 2006: 27–8), seems to refer to a functionary of the Storm-god who speaks on his behalf, a role that agrees well with the ^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-* of Mursili.²⁶ In the Sumerian prayer (1), the supplicant pleaded ‘Let my god tell me what offended him’ and the Kantuzzili-version (2) had: ‘Let him tell me my sins.’ Perhaps the ^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-* is the concrete translation of these pleas, for he is the man through whom the deity can speak and identify the offence. If so, then his status is perhaps slightly different from that of the other diviners, who would rely on their particular techniques rather than on divine inspiration.²⁷

What was the purpose of consulting such a wide variety of experts in the plague-prayers? Archi (1975: 144–9) explains that different methods of divination could be employed in sequence in order to cross-check the results. Of interest is the following passage from a late Hittite ritual:

ṛ^{d1} UTU BE-LI₂-IA LUGAL ŠA-ME-E k[a]-ṛa¹ -ša EN.SISKUR₂ zi-in-ni-
it nam-ma ^{lu2.meš}AZU²⁸ ^{lu2.meš}MUŠEN.D[U₃ mun]us.mešŠU.GI munus^{EN}SI

Sun-god, my lord, king of the sky, the executor of the rituals has now finished (the prescribed actions). Also the diviners, the augurs, the old women, and the dream-interpreter (are there).

(CTH 434.2A = KUB 36.83 col. I 8'–9')

As Bawanypeck (2005a: 267 n. 813) notes, the presence of these experts indicates cross-checking of divinatory practices in the context

²⁶ Note that the Egyptian tale of Wenamun and Akkadian sources from Mari may also provide comparanda in 2nd-millennium northern Syria, see recently Charpin (2002), Schipper (2005: 183–5), Stökl (2012). de Roos (2007: 20 n. 90) adduces: *ši-u₂-na-an an-tu-uḫ-ši-iš*, ‘men of the gods’, mentioned in the *Edict of Telipinu* (CTH 19.II. A = KBo 3.1+ col. II 32), but their function as described in that text does not seem comparable.

²⁷ On this distinction see Cancik-Kirschbaum (2003), Nissinen (2010).

²⁸ Bawanypeck (2005a: 266–7) reads ^{lu2.meš}SANGA, ‘priests’ (but apparently AZU in her n. 813). Based on the copy and the photograph available at <hethiter.net/> PhotArch BoFN06553 (accessed 22 Feb. 2012), AZU (thus e.g. Archi 1975: 131) seems better.

of the ritual, and one may note that this particular set is remarkably similar to that nominated by Mursili in the plague-prayers (3, 4), thus illustrating that the passages in the strongly adapted versions (as opposed to 2, the more literal version) can indeed be related to the actual practice of Hittite divination. There exist numerous reports on combined oracles.²⁹ One example is *KUB 5.24+* (*CTH 577*), a record of oracles obtained from an angry deity following what seems to be an offence committed at court.³⁰ The diviners present a series of questions to the deity in order to establish the precise cause of her anger, often repeating a question with a different expert. Hence the game-oracle alternates with extispicy and augury, and the results are recorded at each attempt. At one stage a dream that appeared to the queen is reported (col. II 12–16), questions on which are again submitted by the divination experts to the deity. This last element is particularly important for our understanding of the plague-prayers, since according to Mouton (2007: 18–23) it was an established Hittite (and Mesopotamian) procedure to couple the interpretation of a dream with other divinatory techniques, be it to determine whether or not the dream was significant or to help with its interpretation.³¹

I venture a preliminary summary. While the requests of Mursili in his plague-prayers ultimately go back to a Sumerian model, other sources show that they are clearly anchored in the reality of Hittite divination practice. It seems possible that the variety of techniques and experts enumerated by Mursili reflects the established practice of cross-checking. The ‘man of god’ (^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant-*) has a special role in this context. He might be a priest through whom the deity can speak directly (‘Let him come and identify the sin’, possibly following the Sumerian ‘Let my god tell me what offended him’). Further, scholars have independently linked the general historical context of the plague-prayers to a corpus of rituals from Arzawa in western Anatolia. It seems that experts from that region were seen to

²⁹ See van den Hout (1998: 10–28), Haas (2008: 8–9), and the selection of texts presented by Mouton (2007: 192–220). It has been argued that gradual systematization of such checks evolved over time: ‘Zwar wurde anscheinend gelegentlich als “second opinion” ein anderes Orakel eingeholt, aber das System von Kontrollen und Gegenkontrollen ist in den älteren Texten noch nicht belegt’ (van den Hout 2001: 440), referring to pre-13th-century texts. But the Middle Hittite precursor of Mursili’s plague-prayer may already presuppose such a systematic approach to cross-checking.

³⁰ On the background see the edition of van den Hout (1995: 94–6, 245–67).

³¹ See also Zgoll (2006: 353–68); see Tac. *Hist.* 4.83 for an example from Egypt.

be particularly competent in dealing with plagues. One such ritual, performed in the main by an Arzawan augur, seems designed to establish the identity of the angered deity and the cause of its wrath. Another ritual that was probably also of Arzawan origin implies that the plague was brought on by a god, Yarri, who had shot his arrows into the land of Hatti and is asked to desist.

It was noted in the preceding section that several scholars have already drawn attention, though only in passing, to the similarities in the wording of Achilles' proposal in the Greek assembly and Mursili's request in the Hittite prayers. Other scholars have compared the general situation and the measures taken to establish the causes of the gods' anger in the opening of the *Iliad* and in the plague-stricken land of Hatti.³² On the basis of the Sumerian, Hittite, and Luwian material presented in these pages, I propose to return first to the passage in the *Iliad* for a detailed comparison, which seems not to have been attempted so far.

DIVINERS AND PRIESTS IN HOMER

Achilles nominates the triad *μάντις, ἱερεὺς, ὄνειροπόλος*. As soon as he has spoken, Calchas gets up and offers to explain the wrath of Apollo. Calchas is a *μάντις*, a 'diviner' (*Il.* 1.72, 92, 106, 384), a man who knows the past, present, and future, and has received that craft from Apollo (1.70–2). Hence the first element of Achilles' triad seems well motivated in the immediate context.³³ What is the expertise of the *μάντις* in Homer? Calchas is described as the best among augurs (*οἰωνοπόλων ὅχ' ἄριστος*, *Il.* 1.69), but he does not use that particular technique here. A *μάντις* in Homeric usage is someone gifted with the

³² Burkert (1998: 126–32), Högemann (2003: 17), Hazenbos (2007: 105), Högemann and Oettinger (2008). Burkert also adduces 1 Sam. 5–6: the Philistines, having captured the Ark of the Covenant, are afflicted by disease and enquire from their priests and diviners how to send the Ark back. But here the Philistines already know the cause of their affliction (1 Sam. 5.11), so one can hardly speak of 'das gleiche Verfahren, die Ursache festzustellen' (Burkert 1998: 128). I cannot judge whether, as Hutter (2003: 236) suspects, 1 Sam. 5–6 faintly reflects Arzawan plague-rituals. See now Hawkins (2011) for the new Luwian inscription ALEPPO 6 set up by a 'Palistinean' king in the temple of Aleppo.

³³ Latacz (2002: 52): 'Achills Vorschlag läuft also (ob bewußt oder unbewußt, bleibt offen) auf Calchas hinaus.'

general ability to explain the will of the god and to tell the future.³⁴ Hence the term *μάντις* occupies a broad semantic field in Homer, which does not obviously correspond to any particular sub-category of divination in the Hittite sources. Yet Calchas is explicitly identified as an augur, and divination experts of this kind are central to the Arzawan rituals against the plague in the army; they are also mentioned in the plague-prayers of Mursili. In this context, Högemann and Oettinger (2008: 21), and more recently Mouton and Rutherford (2013: 338), have pointed to a fragment of nine lines from an unusual Greek inscription from Ephesus (*LSAM* 30 = *GIBM* 678) that contains prescriptions on the observation of bird-flight and is usually dated to the 6th or early 5th century BC.³⁵ Beyond the trivial dualism ‘right side = favourable’, ‘left side = unfavourable’, at least two similarities emerge when compared to the practices of Hittite augury. The inscription mentions the criterium of flying from left to right (ἐγ δὲ τῆς ἀριστ[ερῆς] εἰς τὴν δεξιὴν πετό[με]νος, 7–9), which might correspond to the diagonal flight-paths that are often recorded in Hittite augury.³⁶ A negative omen occurs, according to *LSAM* 30, when a bird flies from left to right and then ‘hides’ (sc. itself, ἀποκρ[ύ]ψι, 9–10), that is, disappears from sight.³⁷ This too finds possible parallels in Hittite reports where a bird is said to fly along

³⁴ Explaining the will of a god: e.g. ἄμμι δὲ μάντις (sc. Calchas) / εἰ εἰδὼς ἀγόρευε θεοπροπίας Ἐκάτοιο (*Il.* 1.384–5); μαντεύομαι as telling the future: e.g. *Il.* 16.859 and 19.420 (of characters who try to predict someone’s death). See Casevitz (1992), who also argues against the supposed etymological link between *μάντις* and *μανία*. Such a link is semantically unattractive, compare e.g. Graf (1997: 475): ‘Neben den Priestern stehen die Seher (*μάντις*); in ihrer Bezeichnung lebt die kultische Ekstase (*μανία*) fort, derer sie sich freilich in historischer Zeit kaum mehr bedienten.’ Bartolotta (2004) tries to speculate on the earlier times.

³⁵ Reproduced in Cook (1987) as no. 33. See esp. Herbillon (1924), Sokolowski (1955: 84–6), Dillon (1996: 104–7). The inscription preserves the historically older form of the aorist subjunctive (ἀποκρύψει, ἐπάρει). See also n. 45 on the find-spot.

³⁶ See Haas (2008: 38–45). Compare *Il.* 12.239–40: (of interpreting bird-flight) εἴτ’ ἐπὶ δεξιῇ ἴωσι πρὸς ἧώ τ’ ἡελίον τε / εἴτ’ ἐπ’ ἀριστερὰ τοί γε ποτὶ ζόφον ἡερόντα. While this is indeed a rare comment on the technicalities of bird-observation, as Trampedach (2008: 216 n. 27) notes, it remains quite vague: ‘flying to the right towards the east’ and ‘flying to the left towards the west’ could in practice refer to many different flight-paths. The *οἰωνοσκοπικά* attributed to Posidippus (21–35 Austin–Bastianini), on which see Baumbach and Trampedach (2004), do not add anything new.

³⁷ Compare, for the terminology, D.Chr. 36.61: ὥσπερ οἱ δεινοὶ περὶ τοὺς ὄρνιθας φασι τὸν σφόδρα ἄνω χωρήσαντα καὶ τοῖς νέφεσιν ἐγκρύψαντα αὐτὸν ἀτελεῖ τὴν μαντείαν ποιεῖν.

and then ‘hide itself’ (*munnae*-, middle voice).³⁸ One might also note that, in Mesopotamian omens, movement from right to left is often considered favourable whereas movement in the opposite direction is considered unfavourable (just as in *LSAM* 30).³⁹

The form of the inscription, which is formulated as a series of conditional clauses where the apodosis is ‘favourable’ or ‘unfavourable’, has a prescriptive nature that has long been seen as unusual in the Greek world.⁴⁰ The fragmentary state of *LSAM* 30 means that we cannot be certain of its full content and context, but it might nevertheless represent a piece of archaic evidence from western Anatolia of the type of oracular practices that are also attested by Hittite sources.⁴¹ This interpretation would agree with recent historical and archaeological research. We know that augurs from the region of Arzawa helped the Hittites to cope with plagues in the army, and it is now agreed that Ephesus should be identified with Apasa, a town in

³⁸ As noted also by Mouton and Rutherford (2013: 338). Compare in particular the following report in the (slightly modified) translation with suggested explanations of technical terms by Beal (2002: 71): ‘We also saw a *maršannašši*-bird. While we were watching, we saw another *maršannašši* behind the river *tarwiyallian* (= in the far left corner?). It came across the river *tarwiyallian* (= diagonally left to right?). Then it went off diagonally(?) *tarwiyallian* (= on the same diagonal?). The *maršannašši* that we (originally) saw went off *zilawan* on the good side (= from the distant part of the right side?) and hid itself (i.e. disappeared from view)’ (*CTH* 573 = *KUB* 18.5 + *KUB* 49.13 col. I 21–7).

³⁹ As noted by Guinan (1996: 9). See e.g. *Šumma alu* tablet 79.77 (of a falcon, ed. Leichty and Kienast 2003), *K* 139 rev. 1–2 (star, ed. Virolleaud 1911: 125), *STT* 73 col. III 87 (star), *AfO* 48–9, 28 3–4 (falcon) 63–4 (star). But other texts seem erratic on this point, see de Zorzi (2009: 122–3) on *BM* 108874.

⁴⁰ Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1931–2: I 148): ‘In Ephesos waren die Regeln an einem öffentlichen Gebäude angeschrieben... Aber das ist ungewöhnlich, wohl schwerlich griechisch.’ Flower (2008: 32–3) likewise emphasizes the uniqueness of this text among Greek sources and compares the protasis–apodosis structure to Babylonian omen lists. Such a structure is shown e.g. by the Akkadian text *BM* 108874 (unknown origin, 12th century BC, ed. de Zorzi 2009), which prescribes how to interpret the behaviour of falcons and ravens.

⁴¹ Dillon (1996: 106–7, 120) insists that some elements of *LSAM* 30 can be compared to general references to bird-observation in other Greek sources. And indeed they can (see *Il.* 12.239–40 and *D.Chr.* 36.61, cited in the preceding notes), but that does not mean that one should not consider more ancient non-Greek sources from Asia Minor, given the date and location of the inscription (see further comments below). Hittite records of augury happen to offer better parallels in this case, especially for the prescriptive nature and the technical detail on (at least) two central features, namely diagonal flight-paths and the ominous significance of disappearing, neither of which Dillon takes into account. See also Collins (2002: 28–9), Smith (2013: 70–1).

the core of Arzawa according to Hittite documents.⁴² Following recent excavations, it has been suggested that Apasa should be identified more precisely with a hill named Ayasoluk,⁴³ and Ayasoluk was certainly the site of the first Greek settlements in Ephesus, beginning in the late 11th century BC.⁴⁴ It also happens to be the location where LSAM 30 was found.⁴⁵ From that hill one would have had a splendid view of the river Kaystros, where bird-flight must have been a noted spectacle. Homer mentions it in a simile on the Greek army flooding into the Scamandrian plain:

ὥς τ' ὀρνίθων πετεηνῶν ἔθνεα πολλά,
 χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ κύκνων δουλιχοδείρων,
 Ἀσίῳ(ι) ἐν λειμῶνι Καῦστρίου ἀμφὶ ῥέεθρα
 ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ποτῶνται ἀγαλλόμενα πτερύγεσσιν,
 κλαγγῆδ' ὄν προκαθίζόντων, σμαραγεῖ δέ τε λειμῶν

And as the many peoples of the flighty birds,
 of geese, cranes, or long-necked swans,
 who on the Asian meadow by the streams of the Kaystros
 keep flying about here and there, rejoicing in their wings
 as they settle on down with screeching and the meadow echoes
 (—just so the many tribes poured into the plain).

(*Il.* 2.459–63)⁴⁶

Incidentally or not, Hittite augury was always performed on meadows by a river.⁴⁷ The Homeric simile suggests familiarity with such a bird-rich riverside scene; the fact that it is explicitly located on the banks of the Kaystros is surely suggestive in connection with our inscription from Ephesus.⁴⁸

⁴² See Hawkins (1998).

⁴³ See Büyükkolancı (2000), Aro (2003: 286), Büyükkolancı (2007), Niemeier (2008: 302), Beckman, Bryce, and Cline (2011: 46).

⁴⁴ Kerschner (2008: 122), Kerschner (2006).

⁴⁵ 'On the Castle Hill at Ayasalouk, close to the "Gate of Persecution", as it is called, I found an interesting Greek inscription of an early period, relating to the art of divination by the flight of birds. This inscription I secured by sawing it off the large block of marble on which it was engraved' (Wood 1877: 40–1).

⁴⁶ Compare *Il.* 15.690–4 (Hector rushes onto the ships just as an eagle rushes onto geese, cranes, and swans grazing by a river).

⁴⁷ According to Haas (2008: 31).

⁴⁸ As was noted e.g. by Herbillon (1924). The incident reported by Xen. *An.* 6.1.23 might also reflect the special importance of bird-observation in Ephesus.

To return to the passage in question, it would appear that the Homeric *μάντις* does not neatly correspond to any of the types of diviners mentioned in the Hittite plague-prayers. It is unsurprising that augury was not mentioned in the ultimate Old Babylonian Sumerian model (1), since this was a practice that has not yet appeared in any Sumerian sources of that period. It is better-attested in northern Syria and Anatolia, and Mursili did introduce an augur (^{lu2}MUŠEN.DU₃) into his set of diviners (3), a fact that may be connected to the presence of augurs from Arzawa in rituals against the plague in the Hittite army. The inscription *LSAM* 30 from Ephesus together with the simile from the *Iliad* could then be seen as an archaic Greek reflection of more ancient (Arzawan?) augury in this area. It should be possible to assess the true importance of this inscription more fully, once further research permits a better understanding of the texts relating to augury from Hattusa, in particular their technical terminology.

A further possible piece of evidence for such continuity of Arzawan practices can be mentioned here. In the preceding section I quoted from the plague-ritual of Dandanku for the Hittite army (*CTH* 425. A), which is likely to belong to the Arzawa-group. In the quoted passage, the god Yarri is asked to shoot his baneful arrows elsewhere in the future, and to spare the land of Hatti. The shooting of plague-bearing arrows into the army camp brings to mind the behaviour of Apollo at the opening of the *Iliad*, as some scholars have pointed out.⁴⁹ Ethnologists have noted that many cultures attribute diseases to arrows sent by sorcerers or demons,⁵⁰ and the scene in *Iliad* 1 and some of the possible Near Eastern comparanda, including the arrows of Yarri in *CTH* 425.A, could be interpreted in that light.⁵¹ But *CTH* 425.A and the *Iliad* share not just the general image of arrows bearing a god-sent plague, but also the detail that this plague struck an army.

⁴⁹ Haas (2003: II 785), Högemann and Oettinger (2008: 15–16), Haas (2011: 288–9), see also Kümmel (1967: 101 n. 53). Classical scholarship seems to be largely unaware of this Hittite plague-ritual, which goes unmentioned in the relevant discussions of Apollo in *Il.* 1 by Schrepper (1974: 214–15, 223–7), Burkert (1975: 73–4), Muth (1988: 92), West (1997: 348–9), Latacz (2002: 43), Huber (2005: 92–3), Willi (2006), Loudon (2006: 154–5), West (2011a: 83).

⁵⁰ See Honko (1959: 41–82) and Eliade (1968: 463–5) with examples, in particular Honko (1959: 157–92) on plague-bearing arrows in Finnic folklore.

⁵¹ West (1997: 348–9) adduces Ugaritic and Old Testament examples for such pernicious arrows: compare esp. Deut. 32.23–4.

Further, the diviner Dandanku is described as invoking the god Yarri to send his arrows into the enemy land ('God, keep shooting hence at the enemy land with arrows!'), just as Chryses prays to Apollo to send his arrows onto the Greeks (*Il.* 1.37–42). Much later still, in the wake of a plague imported by Roman armies from Mesopotamia in the 2nd century AD, cities along the Maeander and Hermos valleys were instructed by the Clarian oracle of Apollo to put up statues of Apollo as archer, so that he might shoot away the disease.⁵²

Considerable attention has been devoted in this context to identifying possible connections between Apollo and Near Eastern senders of plagues,⁵³ but much less thought has been given to the figure of Chryses. Might it not be conceivable that his plea to Apollo reflects elements of Arzawan plague-rituals for the Hittite army, of the kind also seen in *CTH* 425.A? Chryses is not trying to avert the plague from an army, which is the central purpose of Dandanku's ritual. The analogy is not perfect, and it would be absurd to suggest a direct relation between the *Iliad* and *CTH* 425.A. But the fact remains that both Dandanku, who is likely to have been Arzawan, and Chryses, a priest of Apollo from the Troad, have the power to invoke their god to shoot plague-bringing arrows onto the enemy: from the Hittite army to the enemy land in the former case, and simply into the enemy army camp in the latter. My suggestion is that the presence of Chryses in the *Iliad* could be a trace, like *LSAM* 30, of western Anatolian divinatory practices, in this case relating to plagues in the army, that are earlier attested in Hittite sources. All of this would be in keeping with the general statement of Hutter (2003: 265), according to which the possibility of Greek reflections of western Anatolian practices must be admitted in principle.

The second functionary mentioned by Achilles is the *ἱερεὺς*, who seems in this instance to have divinatory abilities comparable to that of a *μάντις*. A recent study of Greek divination has described his inclusion in the proposal of Achilles as a piece of 'rhetorical amplification' (Flower 2008: 36), but it should be possible to see further

⁵² Nos. 4 (Hierapolis) and 8 (Caesarea Trocetta) in Merkelbach and Stauber (1996), but see also no. 9 (Kallipolis) and in general Graf (1992: 271–2), Huber (2005: 135–43).

⁵³ See esp. Schretter (1974: 226–7), Burkert (1975: 73–4), Münnich (2013: 252–3), also Mazoyer (2008: 155).

with the help of Homer and earlier Anatolian sources.⁵⁴ An important parallel passage comes at the end of the *Iliad*, where Priam prepares to meet Achilles in order to ransom the body of Hector. Priam rejects his wife's concerns about the mission, claiming to have received direct instructions from the gods (via Iris, 24.171–87):

μή μ' ἐθέλοντ' ἰέναι κατερύκανε, μηδέ μοι αὐτῇ
 ὄρνις ἐν μεγάροισι κακὸς πέλε'. οὐδέ με πείσεις.
 εἰ μὲν γάρ τίς μ' ἄλλος ἐπιχθονίων ἐκέλευεν,
 ἧ' οἱ μάντιές εἰσι θυοσκόοι ἢ ἱερεῖς,
 ψεῦδός κεν φαίμεν καὶ νοσφιζοίμεθα μάλλον·
 νῦν δ', αὐτὸς γὰρ ἄκουσα θεοῦ καὶ ἐσέδρακον ἄντην,
 εἴμι

'Do not hold me back since I desire to go, and do not
 turn into a bad domestic bird-omen for me: you will not persuade me.
 For if some other man on earth were to bid me thus,
 be he one of the diviners who examine a sacrifice⁵⁵ or a priest,
 we would consider this a lie and rather keep away from it.⁵⁶
 But now I shall go, since I myself have heard and seen the god in person.'
 (Il. 24.218–24)

Given that Priam is only imagining a hypothetical situation in which diviners might advise him to visit the Greek camp, the need to identify these functionaries with actual characters in the poem is not as pressing as in the proposal of Achilles. Yet the scholia on 24.221 record similar difficulties in interpreting the distinction between the functionaries. Some are said to have tried to turn *μάντιες* into the generic term under which the others are subordinated, in imitation of the same interpretation at 1.62–3. In any case, it is clear that the *ἱερεῖς* are once again mentioned in the same breath as the diviners. The exegetical scholia comment that *ἱερεῖς* here refers to priests who perform divination by extispicy (οἱ διὰ τῶν σπλάγχων *μαντευόμενοι*), given that *σπλάγχνα*, 'entrails', can be referred to as

⁵⁴ Flower (2008: 36) adds that 'Homer, in this passage, is not reflecting the strict separation that one finds in Babylonia and Assyria'. It is remarkable that, while unaware of the Hittite parallels, Flower nevertheless sensed this avenue of interpretation.

⁵⁵ Of unclear nature; it is not safe to assume that this is an expert on extispicy (thus e.g. Annus 2010: 11), a practice that is not clearly attested in Homer.

⁵⁶ = Il. 2.81, where Nestor says that if any other Greek had reported a dream like the one that Agamemnon has had, he would have been ignored.

ἱερά. This interpretation finds support only in later examples, not in the Homeric poems themselves.⁵⁷ The emphasis in this passage is not on distinguishing between particular divinatory techniques, but rather on the fact that the different functionaries represent mediated forms of communication with the gods (whereas Priam has received their command directly).⁵⁸ Hence the ἱεργῆς could simply refer to priests who, by their special connection to a deity, speak on its behalf. This would agree with a possible interpretation of the ἱερεύς in the proposal of Achilles who, given his connection to Apollo, could serve as his medium and identify the cause of his anger.

Are characters in Homer generally known to make such interventions? Leiodes, a *θυοσκοός*, claims upon the return of Odysseus to have always dissuaded the suitors from their evil deeds, although they never listened and hence perished by their recklessness (*ἄτασθαλίη*, *Od.* 22.312–19, compare 21.146–7). This is the same term that Zeus uses in his paradigmatic reflections on mankind's self-inflicted excessive misery at the beginning of the poem (*Od.* 1.32–43), where the fate of the suitors, who are frequently accused of such 'reckless' deeds,⁵⁹ is foreshadowed; hence Leiodes' past advice might be said to have anticipated the views of Zeus and the conclusion of the poem. Helenos, a Trojan augur (*Il.* 6.76), intuitively understands the plan of Athena and Apollo, and articulates it to his brother Hector (*Il.* 7.44–53).⁶⁰ Helen claims to interpret a sign in a way that the gods have planted in her heart (*Od.* 15.172–8). Theoclymenus, a diviner (*μάντις*, *Od.* 15.225), announces to the suitors his vision of their impending fate (*Od.* 20.351–7). But the point is that these are either ordinary characters or particular types of seers with particular types of specialization. As far as I can see, the clearest parallel to the concept of the non-specialized ἱερεύς as speaker on behalf of a deity remains the 'man of god who comes and declares the sin' in the Hittite plague-prayers (3, 4), the ^{lu2}DINGIR.MEŠ-*niyant*:- he too is a non-specialized functionary amid a string of particular types of diviners.

⁵⁷ Eur. *El.* 826–8 (*ἱερά δ' ἔς χεῖρας λαβάν / Αἴγισθος ἦθρει. καὶ λοβὸς μὲν οὐ προσῆν / σπλάγχνοις*): see further Casabona (1966: 16–17).

⁵⁸ Compare Hector's rejection, on the basis of an earlier direct message from Zeus (*Il.* 11.200–9), of Polydamas' interpretation of a bird-omen (12.231–42).

⁵⁹ See Russo, Fernández-Galliano, and Heubeck (1992: 229) on *Od.* 22.47.

⁶⁰ Compare *Cypr.* arg. 1 (with *Il.* 5.63–4) and *Il. parv.* arg. 2 West. On the interpretation of this passage see esp. Kullmann (1956: 118–19 n. 2).

In the context of *Iliad* 1.62–4, the *ἱερεύς* would indeed be a local priest of Apollo, since the Greeks are nowhere said to have brought priests along (although there are altars in their camp, *Il.* 8.249–50, 11.808). As has been mentioned earlier, the Hittite ‘man of god’ is attested not only in the plague-prayer but also in Luwian inscriptions, where he communicates the deity’s wishes to the king. I do not doubt that many Greek *ἱερεῖς* could do similar things,⁶¹ but the earliest and clearest parallels are in the Hittite plague-prayers.

It is the *ὄνειροπόλος* who has caused the greatest embarrassment to ancient and modern exegetes of *Iliad* 1.62–4.⁶² Recent commentaries have described him as an afterthought or an *Augenblickseinfall*, ‘thrown in for good measure’.⁶³ If Achilles is referring to someone who explains other people’s dreams, one might compare Penelope’s request for an interpretation of her dream at *Od.* 19.535. The objection would be that at the opening of the *Iliad*, no one has yet dreamt anything. If Achilles means someone who generates and explains his own dreams, the practice of incubation comes to mind.⁶⁴ But we lack further attestations of such a functionary in the Greek camp. The literal translation of *ὄνειροπόλος*, ‘one who tends to dreams’ (compare *οἰωνοπόλος*), is neutral in respect of this distinction. The same ambiguity characterizes the only other Homeric attestation of an *ὄνειροπόλος*, which is contained in a passing reference to a father who failed to interpret dreams for his sons as they left him, presumably for Troy, where they were slain by Diomedes (*Il.* 5.148–51). This is probably part of a conventional theme, according to which sons are said to have gone out to war to be killed, even though their fathers had divined their fate in advance.⁶⁵ So if dream-interpretation was one established divinatory technique among others in Homer, and if the presence of an *ὄνειροπόλος* in the proposal of Achilles is difficult to explain in the immediate context of the passage, it seems best to assume that he was part of a conventional group of divination-experts to which one might recur in a time of crisis. And precisely such conventional groups in a very similar kind of crisis (plague sent by

⁶¹ Pl. *Smp.* 202e implies that the art of the *ἱερεύς* can overlap with that of the diviner. See Stengel §17, Georgoudi (1998: 348–51), Flower (2008: 58–65).

⁶² See Hundt (1935: 101–5), Kessels (1973: 18–24).

⁶³ Kirk (1985: 59), Latacz (2002: 51), Pulleyn (2000: 142).

⁶⁴ Perhaps alluded to at *Il.* 16.234–5 (the Selloi *ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι*), compare the name of the diviner Melam-pous?

⁶⁵ Compare *Il.* 2.830–3, 13.663–72.

angry deity) are attested in the plague-prayers of Mursili (3, 4). The option of dream-interpretation was contained already in the Old Babylonian Sumerian model (1), and it remained in place throughout the various translations and adaptations of the passage in Hittite, including one version that explicitly refers to incubation. This reflects the fact that dream-interpretation was the only one among the divinatory techniques mentioned in (1, 2, 3, 4) and *Il.* 1.62–4 to exist, as independent evidence shows, in all three of the cultures concerned (Sumerian/Mesopotamian, Hittite/Anatolian, Homeric/Greek). Achilles' justification for proposing a dream-interpreter ('for dreams too are from Zeus', *Il.* 1.63) helps to embed this figure into the broader context of the opening of the *Iliad*, as the poet is clearly anticipating the dream sent to Agamemnon by Zeus (*Il.* 2.1–15).

TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION

At this stage, a direct comparison of the relevant passages is called for. It is, in my view, correct to speak of the diviners of *Iliad* 1.62–4 as a 'set' (West 2011a: 84), and in the light of the independent historical evidence (the Arzawan plague-rituals, the inscription LSAM 30 from Ephesus), it is reasonable to look to the prayers of Mursili for parallels. It must, however, be realized that, as I have sought to show, the prayers of Mursili do not themselves contain a fixed set of diviners. Instead, the passages in question derive from an Old Babylonian Sumerian model that was in origin a request to the Sun-god from an individual supplicant who sought to learn the causes of his personal god's wrath by means of divination. The Sumerian original was translated and then adapted in Hittite, with slight variations at each stage. Practices that were of particular interest to the Hittites, such as augury, were added. Of the three functionaries mentioned by Achilles, only the *μάντις* is obviously motivated by the context; the presence of the *ἱερεύς* is harder to explain with the help of Homeric parallels, and the *ὄνειροπόλος* has remained an enigma to past and present scholarship. All three find functional parallels in the Hittite and Luwian material. I would also emphasize that we are not dealing with an isolated parallel in some remote Mesopotamian composition. The phrases in question are demonstrably transferable and adaptable across (and within) at least two corpora (Sumerian and Hittite, and

probably Akkadian in between), looking back on a long and partly reconstructable history by the time we read them in the plague-prayers of Mursili.

An obvious difference between *Iliad* 1.62–4 and its Hittite and Sumerian comparanda is the fact that Achilles is not praying, and that he is not the king of all the Greeks. One might imagine a scene in which Agamemnon prayed to Apollo in the manner of Mursili: ‘Tell me why you have become angered: tell me either through a diviner, a priest, or a dream-interpreter.’ Given the similarity both of the general context and of the wording of the proposal, these are only minor discrepancies. It may be yet another facet to Agamemnon’s deluded figure at the opening of the *Iliad* that it should be Achilles, not the overall leader himself, who is chosen by Hera to convene the assembly and to put forward a proposal to consult the god.

Further, one element that is absent in the proposal of Achilles seems to have escaped notice so far: the interpreter of entrails. Extispicy is explicitly mentioned in the Sumerian model (1) and subsequently remained in at least some of the subsequent Hittite translations and adaptations (2, 3, probably 4). It is well known that this practice is not clearly attested in Homer,⁶⁶ which would account for its absence in *Iliad* 1.62–4. We can observe similar variations within the Hittite comparanda, where local preferences are reflected in minor omissions and additions to the transmitted phrase. Hence there is no need to believe that Calchas must have been familiar with extispicy, as Högemann and Oettinger (2008: 19) postulate, merely in order to make the evidence in the *Iliad* agree more easily with Mesopotamian and Anatolian practices. It is, in my view, even more problematic to reconstruct, as those two scholars have also done, an oracular questionnaire of Hittite inspiration that Calchas would have proposed to Apollo in order to determine the cause of his anger. We are not told how Calchas knew the cause of Apollo’s anger, or how Helenos perceived the will of Apollo and Athena. The discussion above showed that Homer is often vague on the details of divinatory practices, and the *Iliad* is not a manual for daily life. Homer expands such episodes when it suits him (compare e.g. the overconfident rejection of bird-oracles by Hector, *Il.* 12.200–43, and

⁶⁶ See *ThesCRA* III 6.a II A 3, Stengel §40.

Eurymachos, *Od.* 2.146–93), and it is pointless to fill in the details where he does not.⁶⁷

Iliad 1.62–4 differs from the Hittite comparanda in one further respect. As I have argued, the concatenation of alternative types of diviners in the plague-prayers of Mursili (3, 4) is likely to reflect the common Hittite practice of cross-checking. The proposal of Achilles shows the same formal structure, which posed a major problem to ancient scholarship on the passage ('diviner or priest or dream-interpreter' vs. 'diviner, either priest or dream-interpreter'). But no one would assume that these alternatives are intended as cross-checks, for in Homeric and other early depictions of Greek divination it does not seem to have been common practice to consult repeatedly on the same matter in order to verify a given result.⁶⁸ Collins (2002: 33) has suggested that such a method is implied by the words of Apollo in *Hom. h.* 4.541–9: the god warns that he will deceive some and help others among those who consult his oracle, and that in doing so one should rely on the valid birds and avoid the vain ones. But the text makes no reference to cross-checking, nor is such a method implied.⁶⁹

An example can illustrate the difference in method. Penelope reports a foreboding dream to Odysseus, whom she has not yet recognized, and asks him for an interpretation (*Od.* 19.535–53). Odysseus explains that the dream signifies death to the suitors, whereupon Penelope replies that dreams are in general difficult to interpret and that not everything comes to pass for men. She illustrates this with the famous image of the two gates through which

⁶⁷ Similar remarks have now been made by Mouton and Rutherford (2013: 337) on the depiction of augury in Homeric poetry compared to the technical sources from Hattusa.

⁶⁸ See Klees (1965: 46–9, 64–5) on oracular consultations by barbarian rulers in Herodotus (esp. the trials of Croesus, 1.46.2), and *ThesCRA* III 6.a IV A, Flower (2008: 147–52). Later examples of cross-checking on a small scale include Soph. *Ant.* 999–1013 (Teiresias first notices ominous bird signs, then proceeds to burnt sacrifice), Eur. *Heracl.* 403–9 (different omnia are deliberately gathered and compared). An oracle could also be consulted in order to interpret an earlier sign: Pind. *P.* 4.163–4 (dream), Dem. 43.66 (sign in the sky), D.S. 17.10.2–3 (spider's web). It was possible to use more than one victim for consultation, perhaps as a form of checking: Xen. *An.* 6.1.22, 7.6.44, compare 4.3.9, 6.5.2–8.

⁶⁹ As Amandry (1950: 58–9) explains, Apollo is referring to a practice according to which a preliminary omen is observed before consulting the god in order to ascertain that he is well disposed. See also *ThesCRA* III 6a II C 1 iv, Vergados (2013: 566) ad 547.

fulfilled and unfulfilled dreams pass, and dismissively states that her dream will not have come through the gate of fulfilment (19.560–9). One might compare and contrast this to a Hittite oracle-report like *CTH* 577, where col. II 12–41 (ed. van den Hout 1995: 256–9) first reports a dream seen by a queen and then proceeds to establish by means of different techniques—namely extispicy, the lot-oracle, and augury—whether the dream was a significant one or not. The cylinder inscriptions of the Sumerian ruler Gudea provide a more ancient example from the late 3rd millennium bc. Having received instructions on the construction of a temple from his god Ningirsu in a dream, Gudea proceeds to examine the liver of a sacrificed animal. The positive outcome confirms the god's intention, which now appears to Gudea as clear as day (cyl. A 12.12–19). Verifications of dreams by means of other divinatory practices are in fact widely attested in the ancient Near East, as Zgoll (2006: 353–68) shows. While Penelope is aware that not all dreams come true, she is compelled to dismiss her vision as unrealistic in the absence of a means to test it.

Hence *Iliad* 1.62–4 shows not only similarities but also differences to the Hittite (and Sumerian) passages to which it has been compared.⁷⁰ It would be wrong, in my view, to react to such differences either by seeking to minimize them in a wilful reading of the Greek source or by dismissing the possible relevance of the non-Greek comparanda. We can observe, and to some extent explain, how the phrase in question was translated and adapted within the Near Eastern corpora. Variations intervened at each step, and thus we would expect such variation also in a Greek adaptation. I would suggest that the differences shown by *Iliad* 1.62–4, in particular the absence of extispicy and cross-checking, are consistent with the general Homeric depiction of Greek divination practices. While it is possible to read and understand *Iliad* 1.62–4 without recourse to non-Greek sources, certain details remain difficult to explain. The problem lies not so much in the various means of communication that Achilles proposes, which are well established in ancient Greek divination, but rather in the mention of two of these particular characters (the *ἱερεὺς* and especially the *ὄνειροπόλος*) in the immediate context of the

⁷⁰ Note also that the subsequent purification of the Greek army (*Il.* 1.313–14) does not contain any of the scapegoat elements that characterize the Arzawan plague-rituals, on which see Bawanypeck (2005a: 243–4).

passage: terms like ‘rhetorical amplification’ or ‘afterthought’, as one reads in modern commentaries, have no real explanatory value.⁷¹ The Hittite sources offer a better prospect, and it can even be suggested how such a link may have come about.

Despite their ultimate Sumerian origin, the pleas of Mursili for information on the causes of the gods’ wrath are clearly grounded in the realities of Hittite divination. Recent scholarship has rightly sought to connect the Hittite reactions to the plague in the time of Mursili with the presence of Arzawan diviners in Hattusa, who had particular expertise in dealing with plagues in the army. The archaic Greek inscription *LSAM* 30 from Ayasoluk in Ephesus provides an indication that ancient augural practices from this region, which are otherwise attested in texts from Hattusa, may have survived into the 1st millennium; the ritual *CTH* 425.A on deflecting a plague from the Hittite army may be another branch of this Arzawan expertise, elements of which may have survived in the invocation of Chryses to Apollo. These continuities could form a bridge between the plague-prayers of Mursili and the proposal of Achilles. The assumption would be that Arzawan experts conveyed phrases like (3) and (4) from Hattusa, where they had been called, to western Anatolia, just as some unknown scholar(s) had conveyed the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn and prayer, presumably in several stages, to Hattusa. The people and texts involved were demonstrably mobile.⁷²

It is a commonplace of Homeric scholarship that the poet of the *Iliad* displays particular familiarity with western Anatolia. Indeed, one passage that proved important in the argument of this chapter, namely the bird-simile from the Kaystros (*Il.* 2.459–63), is

⁷¹ It may be said, therefore, that the alternative explanation considered here rests on what Kelly (2008: 260–1) has described as an argument by isolation, which ‘seeks to separate the feature from its Greek context, showing that it is unusual, defective or unique—something other than that which is to be expected in the text under examination’. But while this was certainly the initial step, the discussion above has subsequently attempted to show how the material in question may have been adapted and embedded into a Homeric context.

⁷² Mursili’s campaigns in Arzawa may also be a possible channel, especially if it is true that his memory survived in 1st-millennium names from this region such as Myrsilos: see Dale (2011). Another possible conduit may be seen in Hittite officials such as Pazzu, who was apparently a diplomat stationed in the region (see *LHK* nos. 5, 103), as suggested to me by M. Weeden; see Weeden (2014: 49–50). The relationship between ritual texts and so-called literary compositions like the plague-prayers is one of the most challenging issues in the current study of Hittite. I hope to carry out further research on this topic: see for now Lorenz and Rieken (2010).

traditionally read in that light.⁷³ The similarities between *Iliad* 1.62–4 and the plague-prayers of Mursili are, according to the present interpretation, to be explained by the poet's particular familiarity with central western Anatolia. But this familiarity would extend not just to knowledge of particular locations, like the banks of the Kaystros or the Ikarian sea. It would also include recollections of ancient Arzawan expertise on deflecting plagues, which was demonstrably sought after by the Hittites, as well as recollections of the type of prayer that one would formulate in such crises. Such recollections could have entered the material that was ultimately shaped into *Iliad* 1 at any time after the establishment of Ionian Greeks in the region of Apasa/Ephesus—that is to say, after the late 11th century BC, according to current research.⁷⁴ The argument proposed here might therefore contribute to our understanding of the *Iliad*-poet's cultural background.

If this interpretation is anywhere near the mark, then it might give new impetus to the study of the *Iliad* in the light of Hittite and Luwian sources. Some scholars, in particular F. Starke and P. Högemann, have repeatedly proposed readings of the *Iliad* that draw heavily on these sources, arguing that Homer's depiction of the Trojans in particular reflects a number of Anatolian characteristics.⁷⁵ Blum (2002) and Rollinger (2004) subsequently showed that this hypothesis was largely based on superficial and tendentious presentations of both the Greek and the Hittite evidence.⁷⁶ Yet the Hittite sources discussed

⁷³ See Latacz (2003) on *Il.* 2.145, West (2011a: 20–1), also West (2011b).

⁷⁴ On current archaeology in Ionia and the Ionian migrations see Kerschner (2006), Niemeier (2007: 87–90). The recent contribution of Işık, Atıcı, and Tekoğlu (2011: 20–2) seems unaware both of Kerschner and of the critical remarks of Haider (2008) on the value of the Egyptian evidence.

⁷⁵ As Starke (1997: 464) writes: 'So scheint mir denn auch die Tragödie der Troer gerade darin zu bestehen, daß sie scheitern mußten, weil sie in der Frage der Helena Einigkeit und Geschlossenheit zeigten und damit in idealtypischer Weise dem politischen Leitgedanken der königlichen Sippe im 2. Jt. [as reflected in Hittite sources] entsprachen, welcher lautete: Loyalität und Einigkeit machen stark, Illoyalität und Uneinigkeit bedeuten hingegen Zerfall und Untergang.' See also Högemann (2000a), (2000b), (2003), (2004), (2005), Högemann and Oettinger (2006).

⁷⁶ See also Blum (2001), Rollinger (2003), Kolb (2010: 67–8), Yakubovich (2010: 75–6), Rollinger (2011a: 34–6). Lebrun (2011: 225–6) is out of date and misleading. I remain as yet unconvinced by the arguments of Bachvarova (2005), (2008), and (2010) in favour of reading the *Iliad* and other early hexameter poetry in the light of Mesopotamian and Anatolian literary themes; I fail to understand on what basis anyone can claim with confidence that 'priests and cult performers certainly carried back and forth songs from Hattusa to Troy, where Greek speakers mingled with native Anatolians' (Bachvarova 2005: 151).

in the present chapter, which have for the most part become readily accessible only thanks to Bawanypeck (2005a), played no part in that stage of the debate. And as Blum (2002: 299–300) acknowledged in spite of his general scepticism, it is in fact quite plausible that cultic notions and practices (‘kultische Vorstellungen und Praktiken’) of Anatolian origin should have been taken over by Greeks in western Anatolia from the 11th century BC onwards,⁷⁷ and that a composition like the *Iliad* might reflect such adaptations. This goes in the same general direction as the interpretation that has been considered in these pages. The alternative would be to accept that the methods proposed by Achilles are not unusual in Greek divination in general, and that the contextual motivation for the presence of the *ἱερεὺς* and the *ὄνειροπόλος* remains vague.

Other scholars, in particular J. Puhvel and C. Watkins, have attempted to identify Hittite calques in the language of Homer.⁷⁸ It is not usually explained how such ‘Anatolian turns of phrase’ may have been introduced into the Homeric dialect, especially if the Anatolian evidence comes only from Hittite sources. On a purely comparative level, one might note that the Greek verb *ῥέω*, ‘to ask’ (as in *ῥεῖομεν*, aorist subjunctive, ‘Let us ask’, in the proposal of Achilles), has been linked to Hittite *ariye/a-*, ‘to consult an oracle; to determine by oracle’. It so happens that a nominal derivative of this verb occurs in one of the relevant passages of Mursili’s plague-prayers: *na-aš-ma-at a-ri-ia-še-eš-na-az [ḫa-an-da-y(a-a)]t-ta-ru*, ‘...or let it be determined by an oracle’ (4).⁷⁹ It may eventually be possible to integrate the interpretation that has been proposed here into a broader assessment of the *Iliad* in the light of older sources from Anatolia; this chapter has aimed merely to present the available sources as fully as possible, taking into account their respective contexts and assessing differences as well as similarities, and to

⁷⁷ Indeed, Morris (2001) has tried to use Hittite ritual and mythological texts to illuminate aspects of Artemis at Ephesus: see the remarks of Hutter (2003: 268–9), further Breyer (2012). Rutherford (2008) makes some comparative observations on ritual and performance in Anatolia and the Aegean.

⁷⁸ See Puhvel (1983), (1988), (1993), Watkins (1998), (2002), Puhvel (2002: 157–77), compare also Dunkel (1993). For a recent critique of this approach see García Ramón (2011).

⁷⁹ See Kimball (2000), Kloekhorst (2008: 202).

advance a possible, though not conclusive, argument in favour of a connection. For now, it may be said that, if accepted, the case of *Iliad* 1.62–4 represents the best-documented example of an ultimately Mesopotamian element, originating in an Old Babylonian hymn and prayer to the Sun-god, in the text of Homer.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to compare selected aspects of early Greek hymnic poetry to similar compositions from the ancient Near East, especially Mesopotamia. Since no other detailed comparative studies of any particular branch of early Greek literature exist, the method adopted here was developed ad hoc. As stated in the Introduction, I have proceeded from the view of Norden (1913: 143) that ancient (not just Classical) religious poetry was characterized by certain stylistic conventions that can be described and compared. When it comes to questions of influence of the kind that are the concern of this study, then stylistic and formal comparisons can help to illuminate, in Norden's words, possible historical connections ('religionsgeschichtliche Zusammenhänge'). Hence the presentation of the central Old Babylonian material in Chapters 1 and 2 concentrated on stylistic and formal aspects, which also offer the advantage of being relatively easy to deduce from the primary sources.¹ This prepared the ground for a preliminary comparison with Greek sources in Chapter 4 and the more detailed studies of Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 4 suggested that early Greek hymns share certain formal aspects with their Old Babylonian Sumerian and Akkadian counterparts, the oldest available hymnic sources in the ancient Near East. Common aspects include the loose tripartite structure (invocation of the deity, expansion of the praises, prayer), the interest in genealogy (relation to the chief gods), and the emphasis on the deity's important position in the pantheon. It was suggested in Chapter 4 that such

¹ As opposed to other, equally important but much more difficult problems, such as authorship, historical context, transmission in antiquity, relationship to other types of literature, etc., which were given less space.

general similarities should be explained by the common function of the texts under study. The hymns examined in this study were songs of worshippers who sought to secure divine good-will by praising particular deities within a polytheistic system. Some parallels in oral-traditional religious songs recorded on Hawaii in the classic ethnological study of Emerson (1909) were cited.

But other shared aspects seem more specific. Several scholars have argued, for instance, that the opening on 'Let me sing'-phrases, which is common in early Greek hymns, was taken over from Mesopotamian models. Antithetical negative predications ('With you, god, such-and-such is the case—without you, such-and-such is not the case') have also been adduced as evidence of Akkadian (really Sumerian) influence on Greek hymns and prayers. Yet the corresponding studies in Chapters 5 and 6 showed that these are not good examples of Mesopotamian elements in early Greek poetry. In the former case, a detailed analysis led to the conclusion that 'Let me sing'-phrases are in fact an isolated similarity between early Greek and Sumero-Akkadian (and other) hymnic openings, which otherwise differ in fundamental respects. In the latter case, the predication in question (while undeniably similar) seems rooted simply in human experience, as reflected in the supplementary evidence of early Sumero-Akkadian personal names and the Homeric poems. In both cases, previous scholarship that argued in favour of Mesopotamian influence overlooked the existence of further parallels elsewhere, especially in the hymns of the *Rigveda*, which are thought to have been composed in the latter 2nd millennium BC.² This poses an important methodological problem that calls for further comment.

The existence of Vedic parallels, for instance, in the case of 'Let me sing'-phrases in hymnic openings, raises three main possibilities: (a) the Greek, Vedic, and Sumero-Akkadian sources are somehow related through contact; (b) the Greek and Vedic sources are related through Indo-European heritage, while the Sumero-Akkadian parallels have arisen independently; (c) the parallels in all three branches have arisen independently. The possibility of (a) has been admitted in principle in a recent work on Indo-European poetry by West (2007: 22–3). Concerning the material treated in Chapters 5 and 6, it remains unclear how any supposed Sumero-Vedic transmission is

² For a critique of West (1997) from an Indo-Europeanist perspective, see now García Ramón (2011).

to be imagined in a historical perspective.³ Nor is there any other certain evidence for contact between Sumerian and Vedic literature. In the particular cases of hymnic openings and negative predications, I have argued that the evidence is of itself not strong enough to link the early Greek sources to the Mesopotamian material; if correct, that conclusion would remain intact even if it were possible to demonstrate that the Vedic and Mesopotamian parallels were ‘somehow’ (West 2007: 23) the result of contact. Whether the Greek and Vedic parallels are related, according to possibility (b), or not, according to (c), is irrelevant to the argument of Chapters 5 and 6. In general, it may be remarked that the case of Hittite, the oldest well-attested Indo-European language, should serve as a warning against hastily postulated Indo-European poetic traditions. In Hittite, the extant hymns and prayers are clearly marked above all by historically explainable Sumero-Akkadian influence, while possible connections to other ancient branches of Indo-European are only vague.⁴

The distinction between Sumero-Akkadian models on the one hand and Indo-European inheritance on the other may seem excessively rigid. It might, after all, be possible to entertain the idea that certain widely attested formal elements of religious poetry that are found also in early Greek sources, such as ‘Let me sing’-openings and negative predications, could be explained as an ancient Indo-European heritage that was perhaps revived and stimulated by the more immediate historical influence of ultimately Sumerian models from the ancient Near East. A more nuanced hypothesis along these lines, which extends far beyond the limits of the present study, would ideally require a convincing precedent, of which I am not aware. Where there is sufficient evidence

³ Despite the evidence for early trade in luxury goods between Mesopotamia and India especially in the Old Akkadian period (24th–23rd centuries BC), on which see Beaujard (2012: I 96–135).

⁴ Note the recent sceptical remarks of Létoublon (2011: 198–9) on the limits of reconstructing inherited models of Indo-European poetry and myth, and her suggestion that the study of possible Near Eastern influence represents a more promising approach to early Greek poetry. Recognizing the difficulties posed by parallels in non-Indo-European sources, West (2007: 20) seeks ‘to identify whatever is Indo-European, not just what is distinctively or exclusively Indo-European’. Hence the aporia created by the observation (West 2007: 310 n. 8) that negative predications of the type considered in Chapter 6 occur both in Indo-European (Greek and Vedic) and non-Indo-European (Akkadian, originally Sumerian) sources is left unresolved. In my view, such a widely attested topos cannot be called ‘specific’, which should be a criterion for establishing historical connections according to West (2007: 21). The same criticism of West’s method has now been made by Janda (2012: 481).

to test the idea in the corpus of texts examined here, such as in the Hittite attestations of 'Let me sing'-openings, the historical background of the compositions in question points to Sumero-Akkadian inspiration, and no appeals to remote Indo-European heritage (or later contact with such heritage) are required to explain the facts.

Chapters 5 and 6 were also conceived as test cases of the common method of cumulative argumentation in favour of Near Eastern influence on early Greek poetry. The subjects of these chapters were selected because, in the case of hymnic openings, a particularly strong case for a 'direct line' from Sumero-Akkadian poetry had been advanced, and because, in the case of negative predication, the expression in question could be traced to some of the earliest written sources available anywhere, namely Sumerian and Akkadian personal names of the mid-3rd millennium BC. The former chapter also offered the advantage that the opening is perhaps the most formally conservative element of hymnic poetry in general, thereby facilitating comparison between the corpora. In both cases, it was found that the undeniable similarities were not sufficient to support the argument for Near Eastern influence.

Despite some general similarities noted in Chapter 4, I would conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that early Greek hymns were indebted to Near Eastern models in formal terms. This conclusion, if correct, represents a corrective to the currently prevailing view that all of early Greek poetry should be seen as directly or indirectly indebted to such models. It also suggests that broad, cumulative arguments based on a collection of disparate parallels should be regarded with suspicion, since they may not be able to bear the weight that has been placed on them.

An alternative path was taken in Chapters 7 and 8, which sought to construct an argument for what I would call punctual influence. Their aim was to show how Near Eastern religious literature can help to explain the meaning and background of particular passages in early Greek poetry, in these cases the Aphrodite-episode in the *Theogony* and the proposal of Achilles regarding the cause of the plague in the first book of the *Iliad*. While this more detailed and specific form of argumentation is of course not new in itself, I have tried to emphasize two points that have not been sufficiently realized, or at least not sufficiently put into practice, by past scholarship.⁵

⁵ Similar arguments have recently been advanced by Rollinger (2011b: 218–19), who stresses the importance of taking into account historical plausibility and processes of transformation.

The first is the importance of context and general historical plausibility. As seen in Chapter 7, and also in Chapters 1–3, the goddess Inana/Ištar was the dominant figure of the Sumero-Akkadian pantheon, and radiated far beyond Mesopotamia to the Levant and Anatolia. It would be inherently unlikely if absolutely no reflection of this famous deity could be found in early Greece and in particular in the *Theogony* of Hesiod, given that the poem's basic scheme is generally agreed to correspond, directly or indirectly, to a succession-myth that originated in those very regions. According to Chapter 7, the Ouranian genealogy of Aphrodite, which differs from the account of the *Iliad*, can be linked to the ancient and widespread celestial conception of Inana/Ištar, especially in connection with an independent reference by Herodotus to the supposedly Phoenician cults of Aphrodite *Oὐρανία* on Cyprus and Cythera. Given the importance of these islands in the sea-trade, which in turn was notoriously associated with Phoenician merchants, it is possible at least to suggest a historical context in which a particular aspect of the most famous goddess of the ancient Near East—Inana/Ištar as descended from the Sky—came to be echoed in a particular Greek version of a myth that can be connected to Near Eastern sources for independent reasons. In Chapter 8 it was suggested that the proposal of Achilles in the assembly ('Let us ask a seer, priest, or dream-interpreter') ultimately reflects a Sumerian phrase that was adapted in Hittite plague-prayers. Although bizarre at first sight, the supposed connection can be supported by independent historical sources in Hittite on anti-plague ritual experts from central western Anatolia in the 2nd millennium BC, which corresponds to the region of which the later poet of the *Iliad* shows local knowledge. Other evidence, in particular the fragmentary inscription on the oracular significance of bird-flight from Ephesus, at least hints at the continuity of practices that are not well paralleled in Greek sources but more easily intelligible from earlier sources recovered in the Hittite capital. While not probative, independent evidence may thus help to strengthen the argument for influence in these cases.

The second point that I would emphasize is the importance of understanding the continuous adaptation and reinterpretation of the material involved, which was evident particularly in Chapter 8. There it was possible to show that the phrase in question had originated in an Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn and prayer, from which it had been translated into Hittite (probably via lost intermediaries). The

Hittite evidence ranged from an almost literal translation to subsequent adaptations that reflected, in at least partly reconstructible ways, the Hittite context of the prayers in which the phrase was put to use, from where it eventually, I have proposed, migrated to western Anatolia, probably via anti-plague ritual experts, and ultimately came to be reinterpreted yet again in the *Iliad*, albeit in ways that are difficult to understand with the help of Homeric sources alone. In Chapter 7 the particular point at which the genealogy and specifically Greek aetiology of Aphrodite intervene in Hesiod's Myth of Succession—that is, after the castration of Ouranos—was compared to the Hurro-Hittite and (supposedly) Phoenician variants of the Myth, where the castration of the Sky-god likewise occasions aetiologies that were of specifically local interest. Avoiding the extremes of postulating 'direct lines' between distant sources or, on the other hand, generalizing vaguely about common cosmogonic or even epic 'traditions' in which the Greek and Near Eastern poets supposedly worked, my approach seeks to allow sufficient space for an appreciation of the elaborate process of translation and adaptation that ultimately leads to the Greek source.

The conclusion of this study is that early Greek hymns were probably not indebted to ancient Near Eastern models—showing, incidentally, that E. Norden was correct, if not entirely for the right reasons. Yet a case for influence on particular passages can be made, especially where supplementary independent sources are available and where the concepts or phrases in question can be shown to have been influential, lending themselves to continuous reinterpretation, within the cuneiform world. At the end of the Introduction I quoted a remark by H. Diller: to show that particular elements ('Einzelheiten') were indeed taken over by the Greeks poets only marks the beginning of the task. How, then, it may be asked finally, could this study contribute to the broader task of interpreting early Greek poetry?

First, I believe that the case of hymnic poetry suggests that Diller's 'Einzelheiten' is indeed the correct term. Hymnic poetry is an ancient and widespread type of song that was also able to cross cultural boundaries. But unlike in the case of the Hittites in relation to Mesopotamia, there was no sufficient historical basis for Sumero-Akkadian religious literature to make any great impact, beyond certain individual cases, on early Greek poetry. Further detailed comparative studies are needed, but on the basis of the material

presented here, the case for pervasive Near Eastern influence is likely to have been overstated. This may seem like a pessimistic direction for future research. But the second point is that, if the arguments that have been made here are accepted, the Near Eastern material can help to achieve a more accurate understanding of certain passages in early Greek poetry, especially where enough primary sources are available to exploit the advantages of the cuneiform documentation as fully as possible. In the cases discussed here, the evidence mainly from Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite hymns and prayers can contribute to and sharpen the focus of well-known fields of investigation: the relation between ultimately Mesopotamian religious concepts and Hesiod's version of the Myth of Succession, and the background of the *Iliad* in western Anatolia as illuminated by cuneiform sources. Third, a more balanced appreciation of the relationship between early Greek and ancient Near Eastern poetry should eventually enable us to perceive elements that were never taken over in the first place, because they were rooted in Greece: the Muses perhaps being only the most obvious example. It is still too early to step back to review the whole mosaic of early Greek poetry, but maybe an individual piece can be made to fit from time to time.

CATALOGUES

Catalogue A: Old Babylonian Sumerian Hymns

This catalogue lists the primary sources and modern editions (if available; usually only the most recent edition is cited) of the texts on which Chapter 1 is based. It is not designed to be an exhaustive catalogue of all OB Sumerian hymns. High-quality images of many mss. are becoming available on the website of the *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative*. References to these images are provided according to the CDLI's P-numbers: e.g. for *Gudea A*, CBS 6984 (P264398) go to <www.cdli.ucla.edu/P264398>.

<i>Abi-Ešuĝ A</i> , to Marduk	<i>TCL</i> 16.81, ed. van Dijk (1966)
<i>Bau A</i>	<i>UET</i> 6.72 (coll. Ludwig 2009: 80–1); CBS 10986 (P266176); Ni 4369 (<i>ISCT</i> 1 p. 73), ed. Sjöberg (1974) ¹
<i>Bur-Suen A</i> , adab to Ninurta	CBS 11325+ (<i>BPOA</i> 9 pl. 60–1) col. III 37'–IV, ed. Sjöberg (1976: 418–20)
<i>Bur-Suen B</i> , adab to Enlil	NBC 9034; Ni 4050 (<i>ISCT</i> 1 p. 110), ed. Hallo (2010: 221–2)
<i>Hymn to Enki</i>	N 2176+ (P277282), see Tinney (1995: 18)
<i>Enlil A</i>	See Römer (2001: 143–8) for a complete (though often faulty) ms. (KU 25) and references to older eds. For new fragments see most recently Zólyomi (2003 <i>a</i> , 2003 <i>b</i>); Molina and Böck (1997); <i>UET</i> 6.565, 566, 567 rev.; Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 574–9)
<i>Gudea A</i> , tigi to Bau	CBS 6984 (P264398), ed. Römer (2001: 3–17)
<i>Gungunum A</i> , adab to Nanna	CBS 2135+19829 (P259218), ed. Sjöberg (1973 <i>c</i> : 24–31)
<i>Gungunum B</i> , to Suen	N 3324 (P278366), ed. Sjöberg (1973 <i>c</i> : 24–31)
H 180+, to Utu	ed. Cavigneaux (2009: 3–7)

¹ These fragments can now be rearranged according to a duplicate that I am preparing for publication.

<i>Hendursağa A</i>	For mss. and ed. see Attinger and Krebern timer (2005), Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 579–80)
<i>Ibbi-Suen A</i> , tigi to Suen	UM 29-16-43 (P256653); N 3564 (P278589), ed. Sjöberg (1970–1: 144–5, 152–3, 161–3)
<i>Ibbi-Suen B</i> , sernamgala to Meslamtaea and Lugalgirra	UM 29-13-609 (P255539); CBS 14053 (P269073); N 2838+ ² , ed. Sjöberg (1970–1: 142–4, 151–2, 158–61)
<i>Ibbi-Suen C</i> , adab to Suen	CBS 8526 (P263329); N 2991 (P278054), ed. Sjöberg (1970–1: 147–9, 155–7, 166–70)
<i>Ibbi-Suen D</i> , ululumama to Suen	CBS 11168 (P266329), ed. Sjöberg (1970–1: 145–7, 153–5, 163–6)
<i>Iddin-Dagan A</i> , sernamursaga to Ninsiana	Important mss. are <i>SRT</i> 1; UM 29-16-91+ (P256696); Ni 9802+4363 (<i>Or NS</i> 22, pl. 43–6); <i>HAV</i> 2 (P259248), see most recently Attinger (2010)
<i>Iddin-Dagan C</i> , adab to Ningublagā	<i>SLTN</i> 85, ed. Römer (2001: 35–54)
<i>Iddin-Dagan D</i> , to Ninisina	<i>OECT</i> 5.8; UM 29-13-704+ (P255627)
<i>Inana A</i> , balbale	<i>SRT</i> 9 obv. 1–21; CBS 7932+8530 col. II 14—col. IV [end]; N 1394 (P276538); <i>TIM</i> 9.8, ed. Sjöberg (1977 <i>a</i> : 21, 27)
<i>Inana B</i>	For mss. and ed. see Zgoll (1997); Molina and Böck (1997); Robson (2005); Attinger and Mittermayer (2009); <i>UET</i> 6.567 obv., 568, 569; Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 582–3) and Attinger (2012 <i>a</i>)
<i>Inana C</i>	See Sjöberg (1975 <i>a</i>) for mss. and ed. Important mss. used here are CBS 13982 (P268976); Ni 9801 (<i>ISCT</i> 1 pp. 66–8). <i>UET</i> 6.571 now restores the gap in lines 188–92. See also Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 583–4)
<i>Inana D</i>	Important mss. are CBS 14052+ (P263170) and UM 55-21-308 (P257247), see further Behrens (1998), Zólyomi (2003 <i>c</i> : 99–100), Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 584–6)
<i>Inana E</i> , tigi	<i>CT</i> 36.33–4, ed. Foxvog (1993)

² Listed in *ETCSL*; no copy or photo available to me.

<i>Inana F</i> , balbale(?)	VS 10.199 col. III 8–41; <i>PAPS</i> 107, 521 (N 4305 col. IV 4'–15'), ed. Römer (2001: 149–58)
<i>Hymn to Inimanizid</i>	CBS 14018+ (P269041), see Peterson (2011 <i>b</i>)
<i>Išbi-Erra C</i> , tigi to Nanaja	YBC 9859; Ni 4058 (<i>ISSET</i> 1, p.127); N3789+ (P278782), see Zólyomi (2003c: 100), Hallo (2010: 212–15)
<i>Išbi-Erra D</i> , to Ninisina	CBS 12604 (P267242), ed. Römer (1965: 77–82)
<i>Iškur A</i> , adab	CBS 7055 (P262105), see Schwemer (2001: 190–1)
<i>Išme-Dagan B</i> , adab to Bau	CBS 7184 (P262216); CBS 14076 (P269090) + Ni 9774 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p. 210), ed. Römer (1965: 236–65)
<i>Išme-Dagan D</i> , adab to Enki ³	CBS 2343 (P259348); UM 29-15-6 (P255860), ed. Sjöberg (1977 <i>a</i> : 29–32)
<i>Išme-Dagan E</i> , balbale to Enki	Ni 4105 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p. 95); Ni 4403 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p. 210); Ni 4311 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p.144), 3 N-T 500, ed. Sjöberg (1974–5: 165–6, 170–1, 174–5)
<i>Išme-Dagan F_A</i> , adab(?) to Enlil	<i>TCL</i> 15.18 col. I–II 2', see Ludwig (1990: 7–9), Römer (1993: 91–2)
<i>Išme-Dagan F_B</i> , adab(?) to Enlil	<i>TCL</i> 15.18 col. II 3'–III 2', see Ludwig (1990: 7–9)
<i>Išme-Dagan G</i> , adab(?) to Ninlil	<i>TCL</i> 15.18 col. III 3'–IV, see Ludwig (1990: 7–9)
<i>Išme-Dagan H</i> , adab to Enlil	<i>TCL</i> 15.22; N 5869 (P279879), see Römer (1993: 92)
<i>Išme-Dagan K</i> , to Inana	<i>SRT</i> 36, 1–44; <i>JCS</i> 28, 104 no. 105; CBS 10336 (P265562); N 5873+N 6989 (P279881), ⁴ see ed. of Römer (2001: 55–89)
<i>Išme-Dagan M</i> , adab to Nanna	Ni 2781 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 pp. 96–7); UM 29-15-132 (P255974) rev.?, see Zólyomi (2001)
<i>Išme-Dagan N</i> , adab(?) to Nergal	CBS 15209 (P269765), see Ludwig (1990: 14–15)

³ This hymn is certainly an 'adab' because it is cited in an entry, which has so far been overlooked, in the 'adab'-section of *KAR* 158 col. III 34, a Middle Assyrian literary catalogue: see Ch. 3.

⁴ According to Tinney (1995: 22), this ms. may join Ni 1094, an unpublished 'tigi' to Inana (*Išme-Dagan Y*). See also Zólyomi (2010: 421 n. 7).

<i>Išme-Dagan O</i> , tigi(?) to Ninurta	UM 29-15-132 (P255974) obv.?: CT 58.25, ed. Sjöberg (1974-5: 161-3, 168-9, 172-4), see also Zólyomi (2001)
<i>Išme-Dagan Q</i> , adab(?) to Nuska	UM 29-16-21+ (P256638); Ni 4464 (<i>ISET</i> 1 pp. 98-9), ed. Sjöberg (1973c: 16-24) ⁵
<i>Išme-Dagan U</i> , adab to Dagan	N 3367 (P278405), see Sjöberg (1973c: 16-24) with Ludwig (1990: 18-19)
<i>Išme-Dagan X</i> , to unnamed god	UM 19-16-3 (P256626), ed. Sjöberg (1973c: 40-8)
<i>Lipit-Eštar C</i> , adab to An	CBS 13381 col. II (P268462); VS 10.199 col. I 1-II 8, see Römer (1965: 10-17)
<i>Lipit-Eštar D</i> , adab to Ninurta	Ni 9695 (<i>ISET</i> 1 pp. 100-1); N 1378+1523 (P276524); N 6383 (P280147); 3N-T819, ⁶ ed. Römer (2005)
<i>Lipit-Eštar G</i> , adab(?) to Nuska	CBS 11169 (P266330); Ni 9614, see Sjöberg (1998: 345, 348-9, 359-60)
<i>Lipit-Eštar H</i> , uadi to Inana	CBS 15358 (P269882), ed. Sjöberg (1998: 351, 360-1)
<i>Lulal A</i> , sergida	HAV 5
<i>Luma A</i> , adab	CT 36.39-40, ed. Römer (2001: 19-33)
<i>Martu A</i> , sergida	SRT 8, ed. Falkenstein (1959: 120-40)
<i>Martu B</i> , uadi	UM 29-13-509 (P255456), ed. Sjöberg (1977a: 6-8)
<i>Nanna C</i> , balbale	TMH NF 4.7 col. III 107-IV 168; CBS 15136+ (P269692), ed. Goodnick Westenholz (1989: 552-5)
<i>Nanna E</i>	UET 6.67, coll. Ludwig (2009: 77-8), ed. Charpin (1986: 366-79)
<i>Nanna G</i>	CBS 10351+N3511 (P265575); N 2746+N 3082 (P277813)+N 3209+N 7035+N 7544; N 3723 (P343351)+Ni 4600 (<i>ISET</i> 1 p. 167); UM 29-13-463 (P255413), ed. Peterson (2010b: 591-601)
<i>Nanna H</i> , adab	SLTN 58 + Ni 4467 (<i>ISET</i> 1 p. 157) + Ni 4274 (<i>ISET</i> 1 p. 138), ed. Sjöberg (1960: 35-43)

⁵ N 3367 (P278405) is probably a fragment of an 'adab' to Dagan (= *Išme-Dagan U*) and does not belong here: see Ludwig (1990: 18-19).

⁶ Listed on *ETCSL*; no copy or photo available to me.

<i>Nanna I</i> , tigi	CBS 8097; CBS 7140 (P262175), ed. Sjöberg (1973c: 36–40)
<i>Nanna J</i> , ululumama	<i>TCL</i> 15.30, ed. Sjöberg (1960: 70–9)
<i>Nanna L</i> , sernamgala	CBS 8084; UM 29-15-58 (P255912), ed. Sjöberg (1973c: 31–6)
<i>Nanna M</i>	CBS 8003; VS 2.1 col. I 1–26, ed. Sjöberg (1982: 74–5)
<i>Nanna O</i>	UM 29-15-570 (P256324), ed. Sjöberg (1977a: 8–13), see also Attinger (2001)
<i>Nanše A</i>	The main ms. is <i>SLTN</i> 67, see ed. Heimpel (1981), Peterson (2010b: 601–3) and now Attinger (2012b)
<i>Nanše B</i> , balbale	VS 10.199 col. III 42–IV 23, ed. Römer (2001: 173–85), Alster (2005a)
<i>Nergal B</i>	<i>TCL</i> 15.26, ed. van Dijk (1960: 35–56)
<i>Nergal C</i> , tigi	<i>TCL</i> 15.23, ed. van Dijk (1960: 7–34)
<i>Hymn to Nergal</i>	<i>CT</i> 58.46, see Viano (2012)
NES 48-07-118, tigi to Enki for Šulgi	ed. Cohen (2005), see Peterson (2008)
<i>Ninazu A</i> , balbale	CBS 14214 (P269183); CBS 15205+ (P343746) col. IV 3'–[end]; N 7332 (P281065), ed. van Dijk (1960: 57–80)
<i>Ninġišzida A</i> , balbale	<i>TCL</i> 15.25, ed. van Dijk (1960: 81–107)
<i>Ninġišzida B</i> , balbale	<i>UET</i> 6.70, coll. Ludwig (2009: 80); Ni 9808 (<i>ISSET</i> 1, p. 187); CBS 1558 (P258891), ed. Sjöberg (1975b: 301–5)
<i>Hymn to Ninġišzida</i>	<i>UET</i> 6.589
<i>Ninġišzida E</i>	<i>UET</i> 6.198, coll. Ludwig (2009: 181–2)
<i>Ninimma A</i>	Ni 4233 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p. 74), ed. Focke (1998)
<i>Ninisina A</i> , sergida	<i>SRT</i> 6 and 7, ed. Römer (2001: 107–42)
<i>Ninisina D</i>	CBS 14065 (P269080), <i>UET</i> 6.188 (coll. Ludwig 2009: 176), ed. Sjöberg (1982: 64–7)
<i>Ninisina E</i> , adab	Ni 9496 (<i>ISSET</i> 1 p. 113)
<i>Ninlil A</i> , adab	<i>JRL</i> E4 (26), ed. Wilcke (1973: 6–9)
<i>Ninšubur A</i> , sergida(?) ⁷	Upper part of Ash. 1911.236, see Zólyomi (2005)

⁷ On the identification see Shehata (2009: 274 n. 1590).

<i>Nintur A</i> , tigi	TMH NF 4.86; K 2489+ (copy: Hallo 1989: 242); ed. Wilcke (1975: 235–9), see also Hallo (2010: 55–6, 71–2, 244–9)
<i>Ninurta A</i> , sergida	TCL 15.7; Ni 4346 (<i>ISCT</i> 1 p. 145); N 3415+N 7700 (P278450), ed. Sjöberg (1973 <i>b</i> : 116–21)
<i>Ninurta B</i> , sergida	CBS 13938 (P268939), ed. Reisman (1971)
<i>Ninurta D</i> , tigi(?)	CBS 11325+ (<i>BPOA</i> 9 pl. 60–1) col. II 18–III 5'; UM 29-16-7 (P256629), ed. Sjöberg (1976: 414–16)
<i>Ninurta E</i> ⁸	BE 29.4
<i>Ninurta F</i> , balbale	JRL 925 (27); <i>SLTN</i> 62, ed. al-Rawi and Black (2000)
<i>Ninurta H</i> , adab(?)	BE 29.5
<i>Hymn to Ninurta</i> , adab	UET 6.592
<i>Nisaba A</i>	See Hallo (2010: 28–33) for ed. and mss. See also UET 6.579–84; Feliu (2010); Peterson (2010 <i>b</i> : 603–5)
<i>Nuska A</i> , sergida	Kenrick 1 (P274564), ed. van Dijk (1960: 108–43)
<i>Nuska B</i> , sergida	CBS 8548 (P263347), ed. Sjöberg (1977 <i>a</i> : 27–9)
<i>Rim-Sin B</i> , adab(?) to Haia	UET 6.101 (coll. Ludwig 2009: 104–5), ed. Brisch (2007: 186–98)
<i>Rim-Sin H</i> , adab(?) to Inana	UET 6.100 (coll. Ludwig 2009: 103–4), ed. Brisch (2007: 242–4)
<i>Sadarnuna A</i>	N 4119 (P278996), ed. Sjöberg (1973 <i>a</i>)
<i>Sin-iqišam A</i> , adab(?) ⁹ to Numušda	VS 17.38 (photo of obv. in Falkenstein and von Soden 1953: pl. 9), ed. Sjöberg (1973 <i>b</i> : 108–16), Dupret (1974)
<i>Šu-ilišu A</i> , adab to Nergal	SRT 12; CBS 14074+ (P269088); N 7632 (P281360) (+) N 7642 (P281370); BM 100042 col. II 49–IV 115, ed. Kramer (1989)
<i>Šu-ilišu B</i> , adab to An	CBS 13381, col. IV 12'–V [28'] (P268462)
<i>Šu-ilišu C</i> , adab	N 1329 (P276476)
<i>Šulgi G</i> , adab to Enlil	CT 36.26–7, ed. Klein (1991)

⁸ Classed as a 'tigi' by Shehata (2009: 253 n. 1464) for reasons that are unclear to me.

⁹ On the identification see Shehata (2009: 363 n. 2053).

- Šulgi H, adab(?) to Ninlil (?) *BE* 31.4; N 1279 (P276430); CBS 7266 (P262294)
- Šulgi Q, adab(?) to Utu *SRT* 15
- Šulgi T, tigi(?) to Ninurta CBS 11325+ (*BPOA* 9 pl. 60–1) col. III 6'–36', ed. Sjöberg (1976: 416–18)
- Hymn of Šulgi to Ninisina*, adab(?) CBS 15134+ (P269690), see Peterson (2011a)
- Šulpa'e A *VS* 2.78; *TCL* 15.3; *BL* 6; *CT* 42.43, ed. Falkenstein (1962)
- Šu-Suen D, tigi(?) to Ninurta CBS 11325+ (*BPOA* 9 pl. 60–1) col. I–II 17; CBS 15208 (P269764), ed. Sjöberg (1976: 412–14)
- Šu-Suen E, adab to An CBS 13381 col. III 1'–IV 11' (P268462)
- Šu-Suen F, adab(?) to Suen *TMH NF* 4.12, see Wilcke (1976: 52–3)
- UET* 6.189+585, to Ningal –
- Ur-Namma B*, tigi to Enlil *SRT* 11; CBS 15168 (P269723) (+) N 7926 (+) N 6876 (*ASJ* 11, 66); 6N-T288 (*Or NS* 54, 34); *VS* 24.42; *TCL* 15.38 (*ASJ* 9, 60), ed. Flückiger-Hawker (1999: 183–203)
- Ur-Ninurta B*, tigi to Enki *VS* 10.145; *CT* 36.31–2, ed. Falkenstein (1950: 112–16, 138–45)
- Ur-Ninurta C*, adab to Ninurta *TCL* 15.19, ed. Falkenstein (1950: 116–23, 145–8)
- Ur-Ninurta D*, adab to Inana *VAT* 9205, ed. Falkenstein (1957)
- Ur-Ninurta E*, adab to An CBS 13381 col. I (P268462); *VS* 10.199 col. II 9–III 7, see Römer (1965: 10–17)
- Ur-Ninurta F*, adab(?) to Iškur *VS* 17.40, see Schwemer (2001: 181–2)
- Utu A*, adab Ni 4450 (*ISCT* 1 p. 114)
- Utu B* *NBC* 7915, ed. Kutscher (1976)
- Utu the hero*, sergida H 150; 'Manuscript B' (no number); *MDP* 27.287; *VS* 10.212; BM 78614 (*ASJ* 19, 265–6), ed. Cavigneaux (2009: 8–13), see also Bonechi (2010), Metcalf (2011)

Catalogue B: Old Babylonian Akkadian Hymns

See also the relevant entries in the online corpus Sources of Early Akkadian Literature (SEAL).

<i>to Adad</i>	CT 15.3–4, ed. Schwemer (2001: 419–21)
<i>to Agušaya A</i>	VS 10.214, photo of rev. in Marzahn and Schauerte (2008: 345), ed. Groneberg (1997: 55–93), see now also Streck (2010)
<i>to Agušaya B</i>	RA 15, photos between pp. 176–7, ed. Groneberg (1997: 55–93), see now also Streck (2010)
<i>to Amurru</i>	OECT 11.1
<i>of Gungunum</i>	TIM 9.41
<i>to Ištar A</i>	RA 22, 170–1, photo André-Salvini (2008: 316), ed. Thureau-Dangin (1925)
<i>to Ištar B</i>	AO 6035, ed. Groneberg (1997: 3–54)
<i>to Ištar C</i>	VS 10.213
<i>to Ištar as Venus</i>	BLT 13
<i>to Mama A</i>	AfO 50, 13 col. I'–III' 6', ed. Krebernik (2003–4)
<i>to Mama B</i>	AfO 50, 13 col. III' 7'–IV', ed. Krebernik (2003–4)
<i>to Marduk</i>	RA 86, 80–1, ed. Oshima (2011: 191–7) ¹⁰
<i>to Nanaya A</i>	VS 10.215, ed. Streck and Wasserman (2012)
<i>to Nanaya B</i>	UET 6.404, ed. Streck and Wasserman (2012)
<i>to Nanna</i>	AUWE 23.113 ¹¹
<i>to Ningišzida</i>	BLT 7

¹⁰ See also Lambert (2013: 260). Note the remarks of al-Rawi (1992: 79 n. 1) on the OB context in which the tablet was found, on which see also Charpin (2001). Groneberg (2003: 57 n. 22) doubts that this text is OB due to unspecified 'indications, which will be treated in another place, that suggest a first millennium date'.

¹¹ See Metzler (2002: 734 n. 46) on the unusual form of this composition, which begins as a letter to Nanna.

<i>to Papulegara A</i>	<i>Or</i> NS 77, pl. 36–7 col. I 4–[?], ed. Streck and Wasserman (2008)
<i>to Papulegara B</i>	<i>Or</i> NS 77, pl. 36–7 [?]-IV 4', ed. Streck and Wasserman (2008)
<i>to Papulegara C</i>	<i>Or</i> NS 77, pl. 37 col. IV 5'-VI 33', ed. Streck and Wasserman (2008)
<i>to Utu</i>	<i>ASJ</i> 12, 11, ed. Alster and Jeyes (1990: 7–10) ¹²

¹² *CT* 58.28 is a different copy of the same text.

Catalogue C: Hittite Hymns

- to Adad, CTH 313* *KBo 3.21*. Edition: Archi (1983). Hittite
- to Iškur, CTH 314* *KUB 4.6 (+)*[?] *KUB 4.8*; *KUB 4.5 + KBo 12.73*; *KBo 12.72*; *KUB 4.4*. Edition: Schwemer (2001: 191–6). Sumerian–Akkadian–Hittite
- to Ištar, CTH 312* Neo-Babylonian version (NB): *STC II*, 75–84. Variants in two unpublished Neo-Assyrian fragments (K.3417 and K.6800): *JCS 21*, 262–3. Akkadian version from Boğazköy (Bo): *KUB 37.36 (+)* 37. Hittite version from Boğazköy (Hi): *KUB 31.141*. Editions: Zgoll (2003: 42–67), Reiner and Güterbock (1967). Akkadian–Hittite
- to Ištar, CTH 717* *KUB 24.7* col. I–II 26. Edition: Güterbock (1984). Hittite
- to Nergal, CTH 801.3* *KUB 4.7*. Edition: Viano (2012). Sumerian
- to Šamaš, CTH 792.1* *KBo 1.12*. Cf. *KAR 19*. Edition: Ebeling (1954*a*). Akkadian[–Hittite, broken]
- to the Sun-god, CTH 372* *KUB 31.127+*, for full mss. and ed. see Schwemer (2009) with Lorenz (2011: 280–1). Hittite
- to the Sun-goddess of Arinna, CTH 376.II* The main text (see further Singer 2002: 11) is: *KBo 51.18b + KBo 51.18a + 107/w + KUB 24.3 + KUB 31.144*. Edition: Lebrun (1980: 155–79), Gurney (1940: 16–39). Hittite
- to Telipinu, CTH 377* *KUB 24.1 + KBo 58.10*; *KUB 24.2*; Bo 8072 (see Kassian and Yakubovich 2007: 454). Edition: Kassian and Yakubovich (2007). Hittite
- to Utu, CTH 793* *KUB 4.11*. Bil. recension of Sumerian incantation to Utu (ed. Alster 1991). See Schwemer (2007*a*). Sumerian–Akkadian
- to Utu, CTH 794* Nineveh and Sultantepe versions: see Cooper (1972: 69). Boğazköy version: *KUB 37.115 + KBo 7.1 (+) KBo 7.2* (obv.). Edition: Alaura and Bonechi (2012: 86–8). Sumerian–Akkadian

Catalogue D: Greek Hymns and Authors

Aeschylus (Aesch.)	West (1990)
Alcaeus (Alc.)	Voigt (1971: 175–355)
Alcman (Alcm.)	Davies (1991: 5–132)
Anacreon (Anacr.)	Page (1962: 171–235)
Aristophanes (Ar.)	Wilson (2007)
Bacchylides (Bacch.)	Snell (1961)
Euripides (Eur.)	Diggle (1981–94)
F–B 1.1 (to Zeus Kouros)	ABSA 15, pl. 20
F–B 2.3 (to Hestia)	<i>Fouilles de Delphes</i> III, 2.192
F–B 2.4 (to Apollo)	<i>BCH</i> 17, 563–5
F–B 2.5 (to Dionysus)	<i>BCH</i> 19, pl. 16–17
F–B 2.6.1 (to Apollo)	<i>Inscriptions de Delphes</i> III, pl. 5–6
F–B 2.6.2 (to Apollo)	<i>Inscriptions de Delphes</i> III, pl. 7–10
F–B 6.1.1 (to Apollo and Asclepius)	<i>Nordionische Steine</i> 39, rev. 16–33
F–B 6.2 (to the Mother of the Gods)	<i>IG IV</i> ² 1.131
F–B 6.4 (to Apollo and Asclepius)	<i>IG IV</i> ² 1.128, Kolde (2003)
F–B 6.5 (to Pan)	<i>IG IV</i> ² 1.130
Hesiod (Hes.)	<i>Theogony</i> (<i>Th.</i>): West (1966). <i>Works and Days</i> (<i>Op.</i>): West (1978). Fragments: Merkelbach and West (1967)
<i>Homeric Hymns</i> (<i>Hom. h.</i>)	Càssola (1975), West (2003a: 3–221)
P.Berol. 21160 fr.1.6–18 (to Aphrodite)	Maehler (1969: 94–101)
Pindar (Pind.)	Maehler (1987), Maehler (2001)
Sappho (Sapph.)	Voigt (1971: 27–174)

Sophocles (Soph.)	Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990)
Stesichorus (Stesich.)	Davies (1991: 133–234)
Terpander (Terp.)	Gostoli (1990: 49–56)
Theognidea (Thgn.)	West (1989–92: I 172–241)

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